STAGECOACH

(A Walter Wanger Production)

Screenplay by
DUDLEY NICHOLS

Based on the Story Stage to Lordsburg
by
ERNEST HAYCOX

Directed by JOHN FORD

The cast

DALLAS.....Claire Trevor
BUCK.....Andy Devine
DOC BOONE.....Thomas Mitchell
CURLY WILCOX.....George Bancroft
GATEWOOD.....Berton Churchill
CHRIS.....Chris Martin
CAPTAIN WHITNEY.....Cornelius Keefe
BILLY PICKETT.....Francis Ford
BILLY, JR.....Kent Odell
CAPTAIN SICKEL.....Walter McGrail
INDIAN SCOUT.....Chief Big Tree
MRS. GATEWOOD.....Berendo Fowler
SHERIFF.....Lou Mason
RINGO KID.....John Wayne
HATFIELD.....John Carradine
LUCY MALLORY.....Louise Platt
LIEUTENANT BLANCHARD.....Tim Holt
PEACOCK.....Donald Meek
CHRIS' WIFE.....Elvira Rios
MRS. WHITNEY.....Florence Lake
MRS. PICKETT.....Marga Daighton
CAVALRY SCOUT.....Yakima Canutt
TELEGRAPHER.....Harry Tenbrook
EXPRESS AGENT.....Paul McVey
BARTENDER.....Jack Pennick
Film Editors * Dorothy Spencer, Walter Reynolds

Screenplay of the Walter Wanger Productions photoplay "Stagecoach," copyright 1939 by Walter Wanger Productions, Inc. Remake rights by permission of Television Industries and Heritage Productions.

The main titles and the following foreword are superimposed over magnificent action shots of furiously riding Apaches, to give an impression of the savagery and desperation that set the Apaches apart from all other Indian tribes in the Southwest. There will be bands of Indians sweeping past the camera in various directions - -- groups of two and three riding straight past the camera. This will be supplemented by music to set a menace for our story which is not actually shown until much later in the picture.

FOREWORD

Until the Iron Horse came, the Stagecoach was the only means of travel on the untamed American frontier. Braving all dangers, these Concord coaches - - - the "streamliners" of their day - - - spanned on schedule wild, desolate stretches of desert and mountainland in the Southwest, where in 1875 the savage struggle of the Indians to oust the white invader was drawing to a close. At the time no name struck more terror into the hearts of travelers than that of GERONIMO - - - leader of those Apaches who preferred death rather than submit to the white man's will.

****

The U.S. cavalry encampment fades in against a tremendous vista of desert and mountains. It is early morning and the American colors are being hauled up. A buglar somewhere in the foreground is blowing the appropriate call for the colors. In the distance we see riding rapidly toward the encampment two frontier figures - - - typical scouts of the U.S. Army in the year 1885; one white, the other an Indian.

This scene dissolves into the Bare Room with whitewashed adobe walls which is the headquarters of Captain Sickels commanding a troop of cavalry stationed at the town of Tonto, Arizona. This headquarters building can be near the end of the main street of Tonto for our purposes. We see the two figures who came riding in across the desert so furiously. The white scout wears buckskin, his hair long in the frontier fashion of that day. The other scout is a full-blooded Cheyenne, a powerful-looking Indian who stands impassively. Capt. Sickels and Lt. Blanchard, the latter a young officer just out of West Point, stand before a map on one wall which shows the Territories of Arizona and New Mexico as they were in 1885. An orderly stands near the door. A non-com of the Signal Corps is also in the room, near a pine table on which is a telegraph instrument. Sickels also has a crude desk made of pine wood which is littered with maps and papers. The Indian stands watching but saying nothing as the white scout sweeps his finger down across the map from the San Carlos Reservation. There is a feeling of tension in the room.

WHITE SCOUT
Apaches, Captain! The hills are swarmin' with 'em. They've burned every ranch in this section. (His finger sweeps the map; now his head indicates the impassive Indian.) He had a brush with a raiding party last night. Says Geronimo's behind it.

The word has a striking effect on Sickels and Blanchard. Even the telegraph operator takes a step forward.

CAPT. SICKELS.
Geronimo?

WHITE SCOUT
Yes, sir. That's what he says.

CAPT. SICKELS
(regarding the Indian narrowly). If I thought ... (He breaks off and turns to the white scout.) How do we know he's not lying?

WHITE SCOUT
He's a Cheyenne. They hate Apaches worse than we do.

There is a moment of tension as Sickels looks at the two men, convinced now. The telegraph instrument begins to chatter, and Sickels turns to the Non-Com decisively.

CAPT. SICKELS
Clear the wire to Lordsburg.

NON-COM
(already sitting down to the telegraph key). That's Lordsburg calling. They seem to have something urgent for you, sir.

The officers stand watching as the Non-Com clicks his key in reply and then takes up a pencil, writing as the instrument chatters. He has only written a few words before the instrument abruptly stops. The Non-Com tries his key, but the sounder is silent. He tries it again, impotently.

CAPT. SICKELS
(sharply). What's wrong?

NON-COM
(still trying his key). Line's gone dead, sir.

Sickels impatiently indicates the sheet of paper on which the Non-Com had begun to write.

CAPT. SICKELS.
What did you get?

NON-COM.
Only the first word, sir. (Handing the paper to Capt. Sickels) "Geronimo."

There is a silence that is heavy with menace as the men look at each other.

The scene dissolves to the Tonto Street where a few cow ponies and buckboards are hitched along the racks in front of the stores. We hear the clatter of horses and around the corner at the far end of the street comes the stirring sight of a Concord coach bounding along behind six lathered horses. As the stage comes near, the view moves across the street to the Oriental Saloon in front of which the Stagecoach is pulling up. People are running out of the saloon and from stores to see the biggest daily event there is in town - - - the arrival of the coach. Then the Stagecoach is seen closer. Buck Rickabaugh, the driver, is an important and proud man, and loungers call to him, eager for recognition.

VOICES
H'ya, Buck!
Howdy, Buck?
How's things in Bisbee, Buck?
Have a good trip?

During this the Shotgun Messenger, who has guarded the treasure box from Bisbee, is jumping down to the sidewalk.

SHOTGUN GUARD
So long, Buck.

The office of the Overland Stage Co. is at one side of the saloon and from it emerge hostlers who begin unhitching the horses. A couple of other men begin wiping off the stagecoach and polishing its metal. The stagecoach is a wonderful creation to this frontier town and the people regard it much as people later would inspect a beautiful foreign car.

And now with the hostlers in charge of the horses, Buck, on the driver's seat (with a part of the crowd appearing in the foreground), can get rid of the lines. Through the crowd pushes the Wells Fargo Agent in Tonto.

WELLS FARGO AGENT
Howdy, Buck. Got that payroll for the mining company?

BUCK
She's back in the Wells Fargo box.

The Wells Fargo Agent climbs up to the top of the coach and unlocks the box while Buck jumps down and opens the coach door. Several passengers begin to get out - - - a big cattleman with six-guns at his hips, a well-dressed gentleman obviously from the East, and a tired-looking woman with a child in her arms.

A close view of the Wells Fargo Agent shows him taking out a heavy package tightly corded in canvas and obviously containing paper currency and very likely some gold. He slams the treasure box shut and starts climbing down with the heavy package.

At the stage door the fourth passenger climbs out - - - a Tonto business man, but two figures remain sitting in the coach. Through the rear window Mrs. Lucy Mallory can be seen, her cloak drawn about her; she looks tired, yet there is great strength of character in her clear face. Through the other window, sitting on the front seat, can be seen a meek little man named Samuel Peacock. There is something gloomy and parsonical about his whole appearance. He looks thoroughly uncomfortable and uneasy in this wild environment. Buck, with two or three little boys tagging at his heels, proud of being close to such a great man, sees that these last two are not getting out and he addresses them.

BUCK
You folks might as well stretch your legs...(He looks at Lucy, coughs and corrects himself.)...your limbs, ma'am. We're changin' horses here.

He helps Lucy out and she holds her cloak about her. Her voice is crisp and well-bred with just a trace of Virginia in it.

LUCY
Is there some place where I can have a cup of tea?

Tea is not quite in Buck's lexicon. He scratches his head and speaks politely.

BUCK
Well, ma'am, you can get a cup o'coffee right there in the hotel.

LUCY
Thank you, driver.

BUCK
(who has a tender heart). You ain't lookin' very pert, ma'am.

LUCY
(as she leaves). I'll be all right, thank you.

Mr. Peacock is climbing out, a small black leather case in his hand. He regards the Oriental Saloon gloomily and addresses Buck with extreme politeness and a slight nervous cough.

PEACOCK
Brother, is that a liquor emporium?

Buck catches his arm protectively, lowering his voice.

BUCK
Don't try to preach in there, Reverend. They'll shoot you full of holes.

Mr. Peacock is flattered, but his honesty comes to the fore.

PEACOCK
Thank you - - - I'm not a preacher, brother. (He coughs with slight embarrassment.) I'm a whiskey salesman.

Buck is slightly "thrown" by this and he just looks at Peacock as the little man goes toward the saloon door. In front of the Tonto Hotel, which is at one side of the Oriental Saloon, Lucy Mallory now appears heading through the throng for the hotel door when she is confronted by a nice-looking girl who is accompanied by a U.S. Army captain.

GIRL
Why Lucy Mallory!

LUCY
(gladly). Nancy! (To the officer) How are you, Captain Whitney?

GIRL
What are you doing in Arizona?

LUCY
I'm joining Richard in Lordsburg. He's there with his troops.

CAPT. WHITNEY
He's a lot nearer than that, Mrs. Mallory. He's been ordered to Dry Fork. That's the next stop for the stagecoach. You'll be with your husband in a few hours.

Lucy's face lights up with pleasure. But at that instant something attracts her attention, and we see what she sees. An immaculate gentleman known only as Hatfield stops short in the doorway, and stares for a split second at Lucy. Lucy reacts to his stare. Hatfield recovers himself, lifts his hat politely, and walks toward the saloon. The three who have seen Hatfield are variously affected. The captain's wife looks after him indignantly as he goes with easy grace toward the saloon door.

LUCY
(curiously). Who is that gentleman?

The captain speaks quietly as his wife looks indignant.

CAPT. WHITNEY
Hardly a gentleman, Mrs. Mallory. A notorious gambler. (He gives his arm to Lucy and they go on into the hotel.)

The U.S. Marshal's office is a one-story frame shack with a sign on the window.Burk, the stagecoach driver, goes into the office. As Buck comes in three men are present. "Curly" Wilcox, the U.S. Marshal, sits behind a desk littered with papers,his feet propped on one edge of the desk. A couple of deputy marshals are lounging in the office. One sits on the edge of the desk, casually picking up a prison photograph from amongst the litter of papers. Curly is lighting his pipe, as Buck comes in importantly.

BUCK

Hello, Curly. I'm lookin' for my shotgun guard. He around?

CURLY
(sucking at his pipe under the lighted match, and shaking his head). Out with a posse, Buck - - - tryin' to ketch the Ringo Kid.

With the burning match he indicates the photograph which the deputy is casually conning. He shakes out the match and throws it on the floor as Buck looks surprised.

BUCK
I thought Ringo was in the pen.

CURLY
He was.

BUCK
Busted out? (Curly nods, sucking his pipe thoughtfully.)

FIRST DEPUTY
It's my guess the Kid's aimin' to get even with them Plummer boys.

SECOND DEPUTY
(tossing down Ring's picture). Yeah, it was their testimony put him in the pen.

BUCK
(who likes his unofficial job of carrying news from town to town). All I can say is he better keep away from that Luke Plummer. Gosh, Luke's run every friend o'Ringo's out of Lordsburg. Last trip there I seen him hit a rancher with his gun barrel an' lay his head open like a butchered steer.

Curly's feet have dropped to the floor with such a bang that Buck looks at him, wondering at the effect of his words.

CURLY
You seen Luke Plummer? In Lordsburg?

BUCK
Yeah.

Curly gets up and reaches for a rifle which is leaning against the wall. He addresses the deputies who are watching him curiously.

CURLY
You boys take care of the office for a coupla days. I'm goin' to Lordsburg with Buck. (To buck in gruff explanation) Goin' to ride shotgun.

In the Tonto Bank the Wells Fargo Agent is leaning on a counter behind which stands a prosperous-looking gentleman, Henry Gatewood, writing a receipt. The package of money which the agent took from the Wells Fargo box lies on the counter. A big, old-fashioned iron safe is in a corner, behind the counter. The bank is diagonally across from the Oriental

Salo[illegible] and through the window behind Gatewood the stagecoach can be described with a crowd of people around it as the horses are being taken out of the traces in preparation for the fresh horses. Gatewood seems to be a man who commands respect, and is certainly an important man in this Arizona frontier town. At the front of the office there is a wicket and an old cashier is doing some business with a couple of ranchers.

GATEWOOD
(smoothly, as he writes). Ever since I opened this bank I've been trying to tell those people to deposit their pay rolls here six months in advance. It's good, sound business.

AGENT
(pleasantly). It's good business for you, Mr. Gatewood.

GATEWOOD
Here's your receipt. Fifty thousand dollars. (Smiling affably) And remember this - - - what's good business for the banks is good for the country. (Resting his hand on the packet of money significantly) Money makes the world go round, my friend. A business man can't make money unless there's plenty of it in circulation. We're cut off from the world in this slow-poke town. The place to make the big money is in the East - - - in the big cities.

The agent has pocketed his receipt as a frigid-looking termagant, who has entered the bank, comes up to the counter.

MRS. GATEWOOD
I need five dollars, Henry.

GATEWOOD
(reaching in his pocket, all smiles). Why certainly, my dear, certainly. (To the agent as he spreads five silver dollars on the counter) It takes the ladies to put it in circulation. (Sweetly to his wife) What is it this time, my dear - - - a new dress or a pair of shoes straight from Kansas City?

MRS. GATEWOOD
(putting the money in her purse). I want to pay the butcher. Now you'll be on time for dinner, won't you Henry? I've invited the ladies of the Law and Order League.

GATEWOOD
Don't you worry, my dear. I'll be there.

Mrs. Gatewood goes on out, accompanied by the Wells Fargo Agent, who opens the door for her. Something not noticeable before appears in Gatewood's face as he looks after them until the door shuts behind them. He picks up the packet of money and starts for the safe, something on his mind. He stops halfway and steps to the window and looks out. Beyond him appears the stagecoach, a fresh span of horses being packed into the rear traces. And now Gatewood makes up his mind. Looking around to see that he is not observed he pulls a black leather valise out from under his desk with one foot and begins putting the money into the valise.

On the Tonto Street a group of stern-faced women, all wearing badges, march along almost in military order. In front of them, at a safe distance, walks a girl named Dallas accompanied by a rather kindly, middle-aged and embarrassed sheriff. And as they walk out and appear closer it is obvious that she is suffering inner distress, but her mouth is set hard in an attempt not to reveal her feelings. And then we see the ladies of the Law and Order League grimly marching behind her.

The doorway of a house on the street comes into view. Nailed beside it is a sign which reads: Dr. Josiah Boone, M.D. The door opens and Dr. Boone hurriedly appears, a hard-faced landlady behind him. He is somewhat unsteady on his feet but he has not lost his optimism and good-nature. In his flight he has hurriedly grabbed up an old blue Union Army overcoat and a small bag which is his medicine case.

DOC BOONE
(placatingly). Now, my dear lady - - -

LANDLADY
(shrilly). Don't you "dear lady" me, you old deadbeat! I'm keeping your trunk because you ain't paid your rent.

Doc gets himself balanced carefully on his two feet, gets a better grip on his overcoat and medicine case and lifts his hat jovially to the angry woman.

DOC BOONE
"Is this the face that launched a thousand ships, And burned the topless towers of Ilium?" (He bows and almost loses his balance.) Farewell, fair Helen.

Then his eye catches the sign and he leans over and wrenches at it, determined to take all of his stock in trade with him.

LANDLADY
(tartly). Good riddance to bad rubbish!

The view expands as Doc is wrenching away at the sign, and once more the marching procession comes into sight - - - Dallas and the Sheriff followed by the stern ladies. Dallas stops short at the sight of the swaying figure of Doc Boone and, breaking away from the sheriff, runs to Boone just as he wrenches loose the sign and puts it under one arm with dignity.

DALLAS
Joe! Can they make me leave town?
When I don't want to go? Do I have to go?

The women stop in shocked horror as the Sheriff goes forward, embarrassed, and catches Dallas' arm. His voice is plaintive.

SHERIFF
Now, Dallas, don't go makin' no fuss.

Boone, Dallas and the Sheriff are now seen together, with the ladies in the background. The sheriff is helplessly plucking at Dallas' arm but she jerks free defiantly as she appeals to the amiable Boone.

DALLAS
Do I have to go, Joe? Just because they say so?
(She points at the ladies, and a shocked murmur goes up from them.)

SHERIFF
Now, Dallas, I got my orders. Don't blame these ladies. It ain't them.

DALLAS
It is them. (to Boone.) What have I done, Joe? Haven't I any right to live?

DOC BOONE
(patting her arm paternally, quite unperturbed). We have been struck down by a foul disease called social prejudice, my child. These dear l-dies of the Law and Order League are scouring out the dregs of the town. (Extending his arm gallantly) Come, be a proud, glorified dreg like me.

SHERIFF
You shet up, Doc. You're drunk.

DOC BOONE
(with dignity). I'm glorified, sir.

LANDLADY

(spitefully from the doorway).
Two of a kind. Just two of a kind,
thats what they are!

DOC BOONE
(moving on as he gives his arm to
Dallas). Take my arm, my dear.
The tumbril is waiting. Allons,
Madame la Comtesse. To the guillotine!

They move on out of sight, with the Sheriff on the other side of Dallas completely at a loss. Then the whole procession moves on, the landlady looking at the platoon of her friends and calling out to them.

LANDLADY

Wait till I get my badge. I'll join you, girls.

Outside the Oriental Saloon, four of the horses of the stagecoach have already been put in harness, and hostlers are now backing the leaders into place and arranging the harness, while an excited crowd of onlookers is gathered around. Marshal Curly Wilcox is on the box holding the reins, his rifle shoved in the boot at his feet. Buck Rickabaugh is stowing luggage on the top of the coach and in the rear compartment. Along the sidewalk comes the strange procession, Dallas on Dr. Boone's arm, the Sheriff self-consciously just behind, and the group of ladies now joined by the landlady, who is bringing up the rear.

Inside the Oriental Saloon, Hatfield, seen in profile, is dealing stud to several rough-looking characters - - - a couple of cowboys and a prospector. Beyond this group in the foreground are the saloon windows, through which part of the stagecoach and the surrounding throng are visible. Hatfield is dealing the cards around with dexterity when something catches his eye; from the right, where the Tonto Hotel is, comes Lucy Mallory, accompanied by Capt. and Mrs. Whitney, moving toward the stage. Hatfield stops dealing and his gaze follows Lucy until she has passed the window. A cowboy waiting for his card, calls impatiently: "Cards!" Whereupon Hatfield snaps out of his absorption and flips him a card. His voice, though cultivated, always seems to have a cold mocking edge to it.

HATFIELD
It's like seeing an angel in a jungle, a very wild jungle.

COWBOY
(as Hatfield flips the cards on around). You talkin' to yourself, Hatfield?

Hatfield lays down the deck and inspects his own "down card" as he smiles mockingly.

HATFIELD
You wouldn't understand. You've never seen an angel. Nor a great lady, a gentlewoman, a thoroughbred.

COWBOY
(disgustedly). Come on, ace bets.

Through the window now Dallas is seen near the coach, the ladies standing apart, staring at her and talking amongst themselves, while Lucy and the Whitneys wait at a little distance. But Boone has left Dallas and is entering the saloon. Halfway down the Bar, Mr. Peacock is writing in an order book, the bartender leaning on the bar opposite him. The open sample case is on the bar at Peacock's elbow. The bartender has uncorked a bottle, sniffs it, recorks it and puts it back in the case as Peacock scribbles.

PEACOCK
If you ever go East, brother, come out to my house for dinner. Nobody in St. Louis sets a better table than my dear wife.

And now Doc Boone comes to the bar in the foreground and motions politely to the bartender, who comes to him suspiciously.

DOC BOONE
Jerry, in the past I will admit, as one man to another, that economically I haven't been of much value to you. But - - - (lowering his voice confidentially)- - - you don't suppose you could - - - ahem- - - put one on credit?

BARTENDER
(shaking his head). If talk was money, Doc, you'd be the best cusotmer I got.

DOC BOONE
I'm leaving town, Jerry.

BARTENDER

Honest?

DOC BOONE

Yes, my dear fellow, and I thought you might, in memory of our- - -

BARTENDER

(reaching for the bottle). Well, just one, Doc.

He fills a glass and sets the bottle away again, and Boone turns the glass in his hand, regarding the liquor with fond anticipation. The bartender nods toward Peacock, who is ripping out the duplicate order blank.

BARTENDER

Here's a man goin' with you on the stagecoach, Doc. He's an Easterner, from St. Louis.

Boone lifts his glass to Peacock but his attention is on the glass rather than on the stranger.

DOC BOONE

Your health, Reverend!

PEACOCK

My name is Peacock, doctor. I'm not a minister - - - ahem- - - (he coughs hesitantly.)

BARTENDER

He's a whiskey drummer.

Boone coughs on his drink and sets down his glass, a glow of friendship coming into his red face.

DOC BOONE

What? Oh yes, yes. How are you, Mr. Haycock!

He has moved right over and is shaking the little man's hand.

PEACOCK

Peacock!

DOC BOONE
You don't need to tell me, sir. A familiar name, an honored name! I never forget a face or a friend. (He peers at the open case.) Samples? (He takes out a bottle, regards it critically as he uncorks it, and then half drains it, nodding sagely.) Rye! (At this Peacock hurriedly closes his case.)

Outside the Oriental Saloon now all is in readiness at the Stagecoach, the luggage piled on top. The throng is gathered around on the sidewalk- - - the characters we know and the townspeople and loungers. Curly is on the box, holding the reins for Buck, who straps shut the luggage compartment at the rear of the coach and comes around on the sidewalk toward the coach door as he calls out:

BUCK
All aboard, folks! Stage for Lordsburg! All aboard!

The saloon door opens as he calls and Boone and Peacock come out, Doc holding on firmly to the whiskey drummer who as firmly holds on to his sample case. A close view of Dallas shows her standing near the coach door, the Sheriff keeping an eye on her. Her face is set and defiant now, her chin up. Doc comes to her with the whiskey drummer and pats her arm, but she doesn't seem to notice him.

In the group of ladies, with Lucy and the Whitneys in the foreground, Mrs. Whitney is now trying to keep Lucy from getting into the stagecoach.

MRS. WHITNEY
Lucy dear, you can't travel with that creature.

ANOTHER LADY
I wouldn't be cooped up with a thing like that for anything.

MRS. WHITNEY
She's right, dear. Besides, you're not well enough to travel.

LUCY
(determined). It's only a few hours, Nancy. I'm quite all right.

MRS. WHITNEY
You're not. You shouldn't travel a step without a doctor.

LUCY
There is a doctor, dear. The driver told me.

A LADY
That awful man?

They look off, and as they do Boone, Dallas and Peacock come into view, forming a group near the coach door within hearing distance. Dr. Boone bows chivalrously in the direction of the ladies. - - - And now Buck has the door open.

BUCK
Get in, folks.

Lucy kisses Mrs. Whitney, and Capt. Whitney helps her into the coach and then stands back. Lucy sits on the rear seat nearest the sidewalk where she is visible through the window. Doc Boone helps Dallas into the coach with no less courtesy than Capt. Whitney showed to Mrs. Mallory, the ladies looking daggers at him. Before climbing in himself Doc Boone turns and helps the whiskey drummer into the coach.

DOC
(jovially). Here we go, Peacock, across the desert- - - carrying our own oasis, eh? Ha-ha-ha!

Buck slams the coach door behind Doc and starts climbing to the driver's seat beside Curly.

Down the street, with the stagecoach in the foreground at one side, a detachment of ten cavalrymen led by young LT. Blanchard comes galloping up the street, the crowd staring at them. The soldiers pull in their horses alongside the stagecoach and Blanchard wheels his horse so that he is by the driver's seat.

Then Blanchard, seen nearer with Curly and Buck on the driver's seat, looks at Curly, who leans down a trifle mystified, takes from his pocket a bulky envelope, and extends it to Curly.

BLANCHARD
(crisply). Capt. Sickels asks if you will deliver this dispatch in Lordsburg the moment you arrive. The telegraph line has been cut.

CURLY
(taking it). Sure.

BLANCHARD
We're going with you as far as the noon station at Dry Fork. There's a troop of cavalry there. They'll take you on to Apache Wells. From Apache Wells you'll have another escort of soldiers into Lordsburg. You must warn your passengers that they travel at their own risk.

Buck's eyes are bulging, and Curly looks puzzled.

CURLY
What's the trouble, Lieutenant?

BLANCHARD
Geronimo!

The word has a dreadful effect on Buck, who half rises, trying to get rid of the reins and speak at the same time, neither of which he accomplishes. And on the sidewalk, the crowd looks startled, and the whisper runs amongst the people,"Geronimo!" making a menacing murmur. It continues coming over as a close view of Hatfield shows him standing at the saloon doorway nonchalantly. Then Curly and Buck on the box, Blanchard on his horse alongside, are seen again.

BUCK
(wheezily). I- - - I ain't goin'.

CURLY
(gruffly). Set down!

Blanchard looks at Buck and his tone is cool with an edge of scorn.

BLANCHARD
Of course the Army has no authority over you gentlemen. If you think it unsafe to make the trip- - -

BUCK
(nervously). We have to think of the passengers, Lieutenant.

Curly is stung by the tone of the young officer, and he stares Blanchard grimly in the eyes.

CURLY
This stage is going to Lordsburg. If you think it ain't safe to ride along with us, I figure we can get there without you soldier-boys.

There is a glint of admiration in the boy's eyes as he looks straight back at Curly.

BLANCHARD
I have orders, sir. I always obey orders.

Curly begins climbing down to the sidewalk. Then the interior of the coach comes into view, the crowd on the sidewalk visible through the windows.

CURLY
(opening the door and looking in).
Did you all hear what the lieutenant said?

LUCY
Yes, we heard.

CURLY
Well, me and Buck are takin' this coach through, whether they's any passengers or not. Now whoever wants to get out can get out.

Nobody makes a move but Peacock, who seizes his sample case and lunges for the door. But Boone pulls him back into the seat.

DOC BOONE
Courage, Reverend. Ladies first.

Peacock looks anxiously at the two women opposite in the rear seat.

CURLY
You, Dallas?

DALLAS
(her voice harsh). What are you trying to do - - - scare somebody? They put me in here. Now let 'em try and put me out!

Curly turns to Lucy, his voice softened with respect.

CURLY
Guess you better get out, Ma'am.

LUCY
My husband is with his troops at Dry Fork. If there's danger I want to be with him.

DOC BOONE
Bravo!

Curly looks at Peacock questioningly, and the little man clears his throat and speaks meekly.

PEACOCK
Well, you see, brother, I have a wife and five children- - -

DOC BOONE
(slapping him on the back). Then you're a man. Bravo!

Through the open door where Curly stands Hatfield now pushes his way through the crowd. Hatfield comes to the door and touches Curly on the shoulder, his voice cold and cultured.

HATFIELD
Room for one more, marshal?

Curly stares at him, astonished, while Lucy looks out the window at Hatfield curiously.

HATFIELD
I'm offering my protection to this lady. I can shoot fairly straight if there is need for it.

CURLY
That's been proved too many times, Hatfield. (Growling) Get in.

The gambler urbanely climbs in and seats himself next to the window on the front seat which puts Peacock between him and Doc Boone as Curly slams shut the Coach door. Doc Boone looks at Dallas with a cheerful smile.

DOC BOONE
Well, here we go in the tumbril,cherie.
(He calls out the window as if he were a duke.)
Driver, the Place de Greve!

The street comes into view, with the stagecoach, the Cavalry and the crowd as Buck, still very nervous about this trip, starts the horses. The stage rolls down the street, the soldiers wheeling into position behind, leaving the crowd waving and calling to Mrs. Mallory. Then the stage and the soldiers turn a corner as the scene dissolves to the Edge of the Town with the stagecoach coming forward and the soldiers at the rear raising a cloud of dust. At this moment, however, Buck in the driver's seat saws on the lines. The coach stops, and the man who has flagged the coach comes into sight from the side. It is Gatewood, the banker, carrying the heavy valise.

The banker then comes to the front wheel hub, smiling and pleasant.

GATEWOOD
Room for another passenger?

BUCK
Sure, Mr. Gatewood. Goin' to Lordsburg?

Gatewood notices the curiosity in the faces of Buck, Curly, and the passengers, who are looking out the windows.

GATEWOOD
That's right. Just got a telegram. Had to pack this bag and didn't have time to catch you at the Oriental. (He opens coach door.) Well - - - I've made it anyway.

He climbs into the coach and slams shut the door, and Buck larrups his horses again, yelling:

BUCK
Hi, Susy! Hi there, Billy; Gitty ap! Git alang!

The stagecoach trundles on, and the scene dissolves to a picture of the stage rolling down a winding road into Monument Valley, the horses going at a good clip. Behind the stage the detachment of cavalry is strung out. Dust rises behind them in a cloud. It is a hot, clear morning. Young Blanchard comes into view, sitting straight in his saddle, and then the ten cavalrymen appear in formation behind him.

Now Buck and Curly on the driver's seat are seen close, behind them the cavalry and the vast stretch of desert. Curly, who has his rifle in the boot and the muzzle between his knees, is sunk in thought, trying to puzzle out something. Buck looks around nervously, making sure the cavalry is near. Then reflectively he reaches in his bulging pocket, takes out a stone and throws it with sharp aim at one of the lead horses, catching it on the rump.

BUCK
Git alang, Susy! (Nervously to Curly) If they's anything I don't like it's drivin' a stagecoach through Apache country.

CURLY
Sure funny, Gatewood ketchin' us outside town that way.

BUCK
I took this job ten years ago so's I could get enough money to marry that Mexican girl. I been workin' hard at it ever since.

CURLY
At marriage?

BUCK
Yes sir, I never seen so many relations as my wife's got. Why I must be feedin' half the population of Chihuahua!

CURLY
Don't it seem funny to you? About Gatewood?

BUCK
And what do I get to eat when I'm home in Lordsburg? Frijoles! (He throws another pebble.) Gitty ap, Sam!

In the Stagecoach, Gatewood is seated between Dallas and Lucy on the rear seat, the valise clamped between his boots. He exudes importance and respectability as he clears his throat and tries to break the ice.

GATEWOOD
Warm day, folks. (as nobody answers he grows expansive.) Fine looking bunch of soldier-boys back there. It always gives me great pride in my country when I see such fine young men in the U.S. Army. Anybody know where they're going?

At this Peacock puts his hands on his knees and leans toward Gatewood with flutter in his voice.

PEACOCK
Brother, aren't you aware of....
..(coughing nervously)...what's happened?

GATEWOOD
I don't follow you, Reverend.

PEACOCK
I'm not a .....

DOC BOONE
(cutting in) My friend is a whiskey drummer. We're all going to be scalped, Gatewood. Massacred in one fell swoop. That's why the soldiers are with us.

GATEWOOD
(smiling patronizingly at Boone). You're joking, doctor.

PEACOCK
(fluttery). Oh, no, he's not. Oh, dear no. I wish he were.

DOC BOONE
(cheerfully). It's that old Apache butcher, Geronimo. He's on the warpath.

GATEWOOD
(appalled). Geronimo?

DOC BOONE
You must have heard about it when you got that message from Lordsburg.

GATEWOOD
Oh, yes- - - yes.

Sweat springs out on his forehead and he takes out his handkerchief and mops his face, speechless for the moment.

On the driver's seat a close view of Buck and Curly shows the latter holding the rifle across his knees, deep in meditation, while Buck, still grumbling, takes a stone from his pocket and tosses it with unerring aim at one of the horses.

BUCK
Now, doggone it, her grandfather's comin' up from Mexico to live with us!

CURLY
I can't figure out how he got that message.

BUCK
Who, my grandfather?

CURLY
No, Gatewood. Said he got a message. The telegraph line ain't workin'.

BUCK
Think of bringin' an old man up from Chihuahua when he's ninety-two years old.

CURLY
He can't help it.

BUCK
Yeah, but he's married a widow with twelve children - - - bringin' 'em along too!

The scene dissolving, the stage and the following soldiers go down a picturesque valley and ford a shallow stream, and this is followed by other scenes dissolving into each other:

The coach splashes through the water,Buck yelling at the horses and tossing pebbles at the leaders. Blanchard rides into mid-stream and holds up his hands to halt his men. He looses the reins, letting his horse drink, and the other soldiers break formation, doing likewise. The stagecoach has gone on out of sight.

The stagecoach appears lurching along through a canyon road. The soldiers are far behind.

Buck, on the box with Curly, is handling his reins skillfully, making the six horses stream around a vertical wall of rock. There is the sharp report of a rifle and Curly jerks up his gun as Buck saws wildly at the ribbons.

The stagecoach comes to a lurching stop before a young man who stands in the road beside his unsaddled horse. He has a saddle over one arm and a rifle carelessly swung in the other hand. Curly has brought his gun around in his lap, covering the boy. The passengers are leaning out the windows on fire with curiosity.

A close view of Buck and Curly on the Box shows that Buck's eyes are popping with surprise as Curly speaks calmly to the boy.

CURLY
Hello, Kid.

It is Ringo, the boy of the prison photograph. His horse stands patiently beside him. If Ringo is taken aback by Curly's rifle he doesn't show it.

RINGO
Hiya, Curly. Hello, Buck, how's your family?

BUCK AND CURLY ON THE BOX:

BUCK
Fine...(He clears the frog out of his throat.) Fine, Ringo, except that my wife's grandfather...

CURLY
(gruffly). Shut up!

A close view of Ringo shows him grinning.

RINGO
Didn't expect you to be ridin' shotgun on this run, marshal. Goin' to Lordsburg?

A larger scene now includes the coach,Buck, Curly, and Ringo beside his horse. Curly is still covering Ringo who stands there carelessly holding his rifle by the lever.

CURLY
I figured you'd be there by this time.

RINGO
Lame horse. (He gives the animal a spank and it hobbles off to one side.) Looks like you got another passenger.

CURLY
Yeah. (He stretches out his hand.) I'll take the Winchester.

Ringo makes no move to surrender his gun through his manner is friendly. His eyes smile up at Curly as he drawls.

RINGO
You might need me and this Winchester. I saw a coupla ranches burnin' last night.

CURLY
I guess you don't understand, Kid. You're under arrest.

RINGO
(with charm). I ain't arguing about that, Curly. I just hate to part with a gun like this.

Holding it by the lever he gives it a jerk and it cocks with a click. Curly's voice cracks like a whip.

CURLY
Gimme that gun, Kid.

There is a clatter of horses on the hard road and Ringo looks around. Then, past Ringo and the coach, the soldiers are seen coming around the wall of rock at a canter, and the young lieutenant reins in beside Ringo.

Ringo sizes up the situation and then with a good-humored shrug hands his rifle up to young Blanchard, who hands it over to Curly.

CURLY
(gruffly to Blanchard). Thanks.

RINGO
Don't mention it, Curly.

Curly works the lever and ejects the shells from Ringo's rifle, then drops the gun into the boot. The boy opens the coach door and climbs in. Curly nods to Buck, who yells at his horses and tosses a stone, and the coach lurches forward again.

BUCK AND CURLY ON THE BOX: Buck is thinking, and it is no easy matter for Buck to think. He chucks another stone at a horse.

BUCK
Giddap, Nellie, Git along, Susie. (Glancing at Curly) Doggone if you ain't a smart huckleberry. You figured the Kid was headin' for Lordsburg all the time, didn't you? (Curly just grunts, scanning the horizon.) What'd he mean he seen ranches burnin' last night?

CURLY
Apaches.

Buck chucks a stone and peers intently at the horses.

BUCK
(shaking his head with concern). Don't Nellie seem a little lame? Musta got a stone in her shoe.

CURLY
I ain't noticed it.

BUCK
Queenie ain't gaited right neither. Must be something she et. Reckon we better turn back?

Curly knowing the reason for Buck's desire to turn back, doesn't even deign to answer. He merely picks a stone out of Buck's pocket and hurls it at a horse. Buck has to hang on to the reins with the added speed.

Inside the stagecoach, Ringo has seated himself on the floor with his back against the door which is between Hatfield on the front seat and Lucy on the rear seat. All the occupants, even Dallas, are openly or covertly inspecting the new passenger, although Ringo seems charmingly unaware of the scrutiny he is undergoing. Gatewood clamps the valise more tightly between his boots as he breaks the silence in a friendly tone.

GATEWOOD
So you're the Ringo Kid.

RINGO
(looking straight at Gatewood, his voice casual, drawling). My friends just call me Ringo. (He smiles.) Nickname I had as a kid.

Doc Boone has been lighting a long stogie. He shakes out the match and chuckles at Ringo.

DOC BOONE
Seems to me I knew your family. Didn't I set your arm once when you were, oh - - - (holds his hand knee-high off the floor). Fell off a horse or something.

RINGO
(sizing him up with keen eyes). You Doc Boone?

DOC BOONE
I certainly am. Let's see, I'd just been honorably discharged from the Union Army after the War of the Rebellion.

HATFIELD
(haughtily). You mean the war for the Southern Confederacy, suh.

DOC BOONE
(suddenly bristling). I mean nothing of the kind.

Ringo disregards the interruption, still looking at Boone with sharp interest.

RINGO
That was my kid brother broke his arm. You did a good job, Doc, even if you was drunk.

DOC BOONE
Thank you, son. Professional compliments are always pleasing. (He flicks an ash off his stogie.) What became of the boy whose arm I fixed?

The smile goes from Ringo's face and his voice is quiet as he looks straight ahead of him.

RINGO
He was murdered.

The scene dissolves to moving views of the Stagecoach as it descends into the desert country again, and then these dissolve to another picture of Buck and Curly on the box while Curly is scanning the horizon vigilantly, his rifle across his knees, and Buck is busying himself with the horses.

BUCK
When you been around horses long as I have, Curly, you get to know 'em like they was human beings. Take Susie there. She's a doggone sight smarter than most people I know. Look at her put her ears up when I say her name. Why, when I'm drivin' her alone I can talk to Susie.

CURLY
Talk to her then and stop talkin' to me. I'm busy.

Buck looks hurt. He ignores Curly and flaps the reins.

BUCK
Giddap, Susie. Some folks ain't human, that's all. Some folks could learn from you to be friendly-like.

In the Stagecoach as it lurches and jolts heavily: Doc Boone is puffing away at his stogie. Peacock sits with his hands on his knees, an uneasy little man. Hatfield covertly watches Lucy from under the brim of his hat, Lucy is leaning back, her eyes closed wearily. Ringo leans back against the door and watches Dallas with a curious interest. Smoke drifts from Boone's stogie past Lucy and she coughs and awakens, whereupon Hatfield looks at Boone coldly.

HATFIELD
Put out that cigar.

Doc looks at him astonished, and Hatfield indicates Lucy, who stifles a second cough.

HATFIELD
You're annoying the lady.

Boone doesn't like Hatfield's tone but he is a kindly soul and he addresses Lucy with dignity.

DOC BOONE
Excuse me, madam. (He tosses stogie out window.) Being so partial to the weed myself I forget it disagrees with others.

Hatfield assumes Doc is cowed and fixes a cold eye on him.

HATFIELD
A gentleman doesn't smoke in the presence of a lady.

Boone leans back and folds his hands over his plump belly, addressing no one in particular in an amiable tone.

DOC BOONE
Three weeks ago I took a bullet out of a man who was shot by a gentleman. The bullet was in his back.

Hatfield's eyes blaze as he stares at Boone, half rising.

HATFIELD
Are you insinuating.....

But Ringo has already, with quiet authority unusual in a man so young, pushed Hatfield back in his seat.

RINGO
Set down, mister. Doc don't mean any harm.

GATEWOOD
(uneasily). Let's have no bickering, gentlemen!

Dallas looks strangely at Ringo. There is no doubting the determined character that lies concealed behind this boy's casual manner. But the tension between Hatfield and Boone is only broken by Peacock, who unexpectedly leans forward, his voice meek.

PEACOCK
Excuse me, but does.....(coughing) anybody know a hymn?

They all look at Peacock and nobody even smiles. Peacock looks at Ringo appealingly, as a man who has shown strength. Ringo shakes his head.

RINGO
Not me. (He sees Dallas looking at him and he smiles.) I'll bet you know plenty of 'em, ma'am.

Dallas is speechless, and she can only look at Ringo. Lucy looks out the window selfconsciously. Hatfield regards the boy with faint derision in his eyes. Peacock looks at Dallas appealingly, as if expecting her to start a hymn. A dry smile curls about Gatewood's mouth.

DOC BOONE
Let us not be lugubrious, Mr. Hitchcock. How many of you can join me in this?

He launches into "Ten Thousand Cattle Gone Astray," that haunting old song of the Texas ranges, in a booming voice that is not unpleasant, though it has a husky whiskey edge to it. For a moment the others listen. Then one after another they join the song, humming when they don't know the words, until finally even the aloof Mrs. Mallory adds her soprano. And now the stage seems to roll on more evenly and cheerfully.

On the box of the stage, Buck is driving and curly is scanning the horizon ahead, the rifle across his knees. The singing grows louder from within the coach, and Buck lapses into it wheezily. Finally even Curly joins, as the scene dissolves.

A station at Dry Fork: The road runs past a 'dobe wall about five feet high, topped with cactus so that it can be used as a barricade if necessary. Behind the wall in which there is a wide gate made of poles, is a wide yard and in this a low adobe building, with corral attached. There are fresh horses for the stage in this corral, together with mustangs belonging to those at the station. A Mexican boy, who has been standing on the gate holding on to the high gate pole and peering down the road, lets out a cry in Mexican and three or four Mexican vaqueros, picturesque, in their high peaked hats and colored shirts and high boots, appear and hurriedly swing open the big gate. Then there is a clatter and the Stagecoach comes into view at a good clip and Buck, yelling at his horses, steers the coach skillfully in through the gate, the cavalry escort cantering up behind the stage.

Buck pulls his horses to a stop in front of the long low adobe building in the station yard, the Mexicans holding the gate open while the soldiers trot in. Then the Mexicans swing the gate shut and come on the run to the stage horses, holding their bridles while Buck and Curly jump down and Lt. Blanchard pulls his horse alongside. Buck opens the door of the coach and the passengers begin getting out, their knees stiff.

Billy Pickett, the manager, is coming out of the doorway of the station house, while putting on his vest. Behind him in the doorway stands his wife, two children at her side. There is a surprised look on all their faces. Then the Manager comes from the doorway to the coach with the same surprised look. Hatfield has already helped Mrs. Mallory, who looks weary as she holds her cloak about her. Ringo gives his arm to Dallas and helps her down the step. Finally, all the passengers are out of the coach in a little group with Buck, Curly and young Blanchard, who swings off his mount, holding the bridle beside them. Gatewood has his heavy valise in hand.

CURLY
Hello, Billy. Where's the soldiers?

The Manager wipes his mouth with the back of his hand and stares.

MANAGER
Ain't no soldiers here- - - (looking at Blanchard)- - - except you boys.

The group looks dumbfounded now.

GATEWOOD
You mean there are no troops at this station?

MANAGER
Ain't nobody here but what you see.

LUCY
(anxiously). But my husband, Capt. Mallory. I was told he was here.

MANAGER
He was, ma'am. Got orders night afore last to join the soldiers at Apache Wells.

Lucy, seen close, tries to be courageous but the strain shows on her face.

Buck in the group, turns to Curly with a happy face.

BUCK
Well, I guess we got to turn back.

GATEWOOD
I can't go - - - (But he catches himself and blusters) See here, driver, this stage has started for Lordsburg and it's your duty to get us there. (Loudly to Blanchard) And it's your duty, my boy, to come along with us.

BLANCHARD
(Politely). It's my duty Mr. Gatewood, to obey orders. I'm sorry.

BUCK
If you soldiers go back, Lieutenant, we we all gotta go back.

PEACOCK
(meekly). Yes, I think - - - that is - - - (coughing)- - - I feel we should all go back.

BLANCHARD
(to Curly) Capt. Sickels ordered me to return from here immediately. I can't disobey orders.

RINGO
I think we can get through all right, Curly.

BUCK
(plaintively). Don't egg him on like that, Kid. I'm drivin' this outfit and if the soldiers are headin' back so am I.

DOC BOONE
How about a drink, Billy?

MANAGER
Inside, Doc. (To Blanchard) I'm going back with your soliers, Lieutenant. I'll hitch up my buckboard soon as I get fresh hosses for the stage.

Gatewood now turns on young Blanchard sternly.

GATEWOOD
I call this dersertion of duty, young man. I'll take it up with your superior officers! I'll take it up with Washington if necessary.

BLANCHARD
(quietly). That's your privilege, sir. But if you make any trouble here I'll put you under restraint.

GATEWOOD
Now don't lose your temper, don't lose your temper.

CURLY
I'll tell you how we'll settle it. We'll take a vote. Inside everybody. Billy, you get them horses changed.

Curly stalks toward the station doorway and the passengers straggle after him. Gatewood lugs his valise, a frown on his face. Doc takes care of the whiskey drummer. Hatfield goes with Lucy and Ringo falls in behind with Dallas.

The scene dissolves to the Station lunch room where there is a bar at one side. There are three pine tables in the room and Billy's wife is putting food on them, her two children peering shyly from around the end of the bar. Curly has his six passengers and Buck standing around him near the tables. Gatewood still holds his valise, while Hatfield has pulled a deck of cards from his pocket and is idly shuffling them.

CURLY
Now, folks, if we push on we can be in Apache Wells by sundown. Soldiers there will give us an escort as far as the ferry, and then it's only a hoot and a holler into Lordsburg.

BUCK
I - - - (He stops to clear the frog out of his throat and Curly goes right on.)

CURLY
We got four men can handle firearms- - - five with you, Ringo. Doc can shoot, if sober.

DOC BOONE
Foul slander, Curly. Why, when I was training in '61- - - (his eyes fix on Hatfield)- - - to put down the rebellion in the South- - -

CURLY
We'll hear that later, Doc. (He looks at Lucy.) Now, Mrs. Malory, I ain't goin' to put a lady in danger with out she votes for it.

Hatfield stops shuffling his cards and looks at her.

LUCY
I've traveled all the way here from Virginia. I'm determined to get to my husband. I won't be separated any longer.

Curly looks past Dallas to Peacock.

CURLY
What's your vote, mister?

RINGO
Where's your manners, Curly? Ain't you gonna ask the other lady first?

There is a moment of surprise as they all look at Ringo.

CURLY
Why - - - uh- - - (To Dallas) Well, what do you say?

DALLAS
What difference does it make? What does it matter?

GATEWOOD
I vote that we go on! I demand it! I'm standing on my legal rights!

CURLY
What do you say, Hatfield?

Hatfield doesn't say anything for a moment, but cuts the cards in his hand and looks to see what he has cut. We see the Ace of Spades In Hatfield's Hand. Then Hatfield looks from the card to Curly.

HATFIELD
Lordsburg!

CURLY
Four! You,Doc?

Doc realizes he is the center of attention and that it is an historic moment. He regards the glass in his hand.

DOC BOONE
I am not only a philosopher, I am also a fatalist. Somewhere, sometime, there may be the right bullet or the wrong bottle waiting for Josiah Boone. Why worry when or where?

CURLY

(impatiently). Yes or no?

DOC BOONE
Having this wisdom, sir, I have always courted danger. During the late war - - - (looking darkly at Hatfield) - - - when I had the honor, sir, to serve the Union under our great President, Abraham Lincoln, I fought midst shot and shell and the cannons' roar- - -

CURLY
Do you want to go back?

DOC BOONE
No! (He looks indignantly at Curly and turns back toward the bar.) I want another drink.

CURLY
That's five (Looking at Peacock) How about you, Mr. Hancock?

PEACOCK
I - - - I would like to go on, Brother, I want to reach the bosom of my dear family in St. Louis as quick as possible - - - but I may never reach that bosom if we go on. Under the circumstances - - - I - - - you understand, go back with the bosom- - - (coughing)- - - I mean with the soldiers.

CURLY
One against! Well, Buck?

BUCK
I - - -

He clears his throat to try again, but Curly cuts in promptly.

CURLY
Buck says aye. That's six!

Buck makes futile motions but Curly has already turned to Ringo.

CURLY
I'm votin' your proxy, Kid. You go with me.

RINGO
Nothin' gonna keep me out of Lordsburg, Curly.

CURLY
(looking at him grimly). There sure ain't. (Then to all) Well, folks, that settles it. We're goin' through. Buck, you get them horses changed. Set down, folks. Eat your grub.

Curly moves to the table at the left. Peacock moves to the table at the right. Hatfield draws out a chair at the middle table for Lucy and she seats herself. Gatewood also sits down at the middle table. Dallas stands where she is, uncertain where to sit down. She knows she is not expected to sit at the middle table, but Ringo is unaware of this. She starts to move toward Curly's table but Ringo pulls out a chair opposite where Lucy has sat down.

RINGO
Set down here, ma'am.

Dallas hesitates for a split second. Then she gets her courage up and takes the chair.

DALLAS
Thank you. (And Ringo sits down beside her.)

At the middle table, Lucy looks embarrassed, and Gatewood looks superior, but Ringo doesn't notice. Dallas, trying to brave out their hostile glances, reaches for her cup of coffee, and Ringo passes her the sugar with a smile. Hatfield makes the break: He looks from Lucy to Dallas, then he pushes back his chair and bows stiffly to Lucy.

HATFIELD
May I find you another place, Mrs. Malory?

LUCY
(rising). Thank you.

Ringo stares, he can't understand it. Dallas spills some of her coffee and the cup rattles as she sets it back in the saucer, where upon she looks down at her plate. Gatewood, not to be outdone, rises pompously to prove his own respectability. At the table, at the left, Curly sits alone, waiting for Buck but already eating. Hatfield pulls out a chair and seats Lucy. Then he sits down as Gatewood comes to the table. At the middle table, Ringo, sitting alone with Dallas, is perplexed as he looks toward the three who have left his table. Then all at once he thinks he understands the situation and he glances apologetically at Dallas' downcast face.

RINGO
(sheepishly). Looks like I got the plague, don't it.

DALLAS
No - - - it's not you.

RINGO
Well, I guess you can't break out of prison and into society in the same week. (As she doesn't lift her face from her plate and he rises apologetically) I'm pretty dumb for sittin' down with a lady like you. Thanks for not movin' away like they did.

She catches his arm and suddenly there are tears in her eyes.

DALLAS
Please! Please don't leave me!

He sits down in his chair again, looking at her with a straight grateful gaze.

At the table at the right, Peacock is trying to eat, but he has no stomach for food, he is in the throes of a bad case of nerves. Doc Boone comes from the bar with a bottle and planks it down on the table, humming to himself. He pours a drink for himself and starts to pour some into Peacock's glass, but the drummer stops him nervously.

PEACOCK
No, no, thank you, doctor. I.....
(coughing nervously)..... I never touch it.

Doc is flabbergasted and merely looks at Peacock as at some incredible freak of nature. The little drummer leans forward shyly, real distress in his countenance.

PEACOCK
I know what you're thinking, doctor. I'm an unfortunate man. That..... (pointing at the bottle).....has been my downfall.

DOC BOONE
Not if you don't drink it, Mr. Petcock.

PEACOCK
(politely correcting). Peacock.

DOC BOONE
Sorry.

PEACOCK
You see, doctor, you called me..... (coughing hesitantly)..... Reverend. Everyone does. And why? Because that was my true vocation.

(he drops his voice.) In my youth I lived a blameless life. I planned to become a man of the cloth. And then... ....(sighing deeply).....I fell in love with Agatha.

DOC BOONE
Oh, I see. She married someone else and in desperation you.....

PEACOCK
No, no, doctor, she married me. (Doc looks at him blankly and he sighs again.) She inherited this whiskey business. (He coughs sadly and shakes his head.) It changed my whole life.

DOC BOONE
I don't see why, sir.

PEACOCK
(coughing). You don't know Agatha.

A close view of Lucy and Hatfield at the table at the left shows her suddely laying down her fork and resting her head in her hand, looking pale. Hatfield addresses her anxiously in a low polite tone.

HATFIELD
Your're ill, Mrs. Mallory?

Lucy straightens up, fighting off nausea.

LUCY
No - - - it's just- - - I'll be all right.

Hatfield pours her a glass of water and she drinks some of it, as he regards her anxiously.

LUCY
You're very kind.....Why?

HATFIELD
In the world I live in one doesn't often see a lady, Mrs. Mallory. I'm only doing my duty as a Southern Gentleman.

She looks at him curiously.

LUCY
Have you ever been in Virginia?

He hesitates as if to evade the question or shape a lie. But she waits, looking at him with her clear direct gaze, and he drops his voice.

HATFIELD
I was in your father's regiment.

Lucy looks at him wonderingly.

LUCY
I should remember your name. You're Mr. - - - Hatfield?

HATFIELD
That's what I'm called, yes.

At the middle table, Dallas and Ringo, seen close, have finished their lunch. Ringo can't help watching her and she sets down her coffee cup self-consciously.

DALLAS
Why do you look at me like that?

RINGO
Just tryin' to remember. Ain't I see you somewhere before?

A frightened look comes into her eyes.

DALLAS
No! No, you haven't!

RINGO
Oh, sure, you're right. (He smiles shyly.) I wish I had though.

Nervously she toys with her spoon, not looking at him.

DALLAS
I know you- - - I mean I know who you are. guess everybody in the Territory does.

RINGO
I used to be a good cowhand, few years back. But- - - things happened.

DALLAS
(thinking of herself). Yes- - - things happen. That's it. (She looks at him.) Now they'll take you back to prison.

A thin, bitter smile touches his lips and his voice is low.

RINGO
Not till I finish a job though- - - in Lordsburg.

DALLAS
But you can't You're going there as a prisoner. (Ringo looks at her and grins as if to say, "I've figured out tougher things than that." But he makes no reply.)

Finally, the entire Lunch room comes into view, taking in the three tables and the bar. The door opens and Billy Pickett appears.

MANAGER
Hosses changed, Buck! All ready, Curly!

There is a scraping of chairs as they all get up, then the scene dissolves to the Station yard: Fresh horses are harnessed to the coach, and the soldiers are re-mounting. Billy Pickett has the buckboard hitched, his wife and children are in it, the woman holding the reins. The passengers are getting into the Stagecoach. Hatfield helps Mrs. Mallory inside. Ringo helps Dallas in. Doc Boone climbs in after Peacock. Buck picks up Gatewood's valise and starts to put it up on top with the other luggage, but Gatewood strides in and grabs at it angrily.

GATEWOOD
Here - - - can't I turn my back?

BUCK
(meekly). I was jest goin' to put it on top, Mr. Gatewood. (He lets go of valise.) Mighty heavy, ain't it?

GATEWOOD
Mind your own business!

Curly is watching Gatewood as he climbs in the coach with his precious valise. Buck climbs up on the driver's seat and Curly shuts the door.

Curly climbs up beside Buck. The gate is standing open. The Mexican vaqueros have the six horses which brought the stagecoach thus far. Each rides a horse, leading a second. Buck chucks a stone and the coach turns out through the gate. Blanchard follows, his men behind him. Behind the soldiers Billy Pickett, in the buckboard, flaps the reins and follows.

Now the stagecoach turns right on the road in front of Dry Fork Station. Blanchard leads his men left. The buckboard and the mounted Mexicans follow close behind the cavalrymen. The two groups draw apart. Then the scene dissolves to a moving view of the Stagecoach in desolate country, an hour or two later. There is no soldier escort now. The people are alone and on their own.

Then we see Buck and Curly on the Box. Curly, the rifle across his knees, scans the horizon vigilantly. Buck chucks a stone at Nellie, and clears his throat, inviting conversation. But Curly pays him no heed. Finally, Buck can't stand the silence and turns as if Curly had spoken.

BUCK
What'd you say?

CURLY
(looking at him as if he were crazy). Nothin'.

BUCK
(meekly). Oh excuse me. (He pops a stone at a horse; then bursts out indignantly.) Well why don't you say somethin'? A man gets nervous settin' here like a mummy, thinkin' about Indians!

CURLY
You say somethin'. You been talkin' all day without makin' any sense.

BUCK
(belligerently). All right here's somethin' that makes sense! If I was you I'd let 'em shoot it out!

CURLY
Let who?

BUCK
Luke Plummer and the Kid. (as Curly merely looks straight ahead) They'd be a lot more peace on the frontier if Luke Plummer was too full o'lead to hold his whiskey.

CURLY
I ain't sayin' I don't share your sentiments, Buck, but you're a born fool. First place Luke would kill the Kid in a gunfight. Second place if Luke did get shot he's got two brothers jest as ornery as he is, and if Ike Plummer didn't kill the Kid then Hank Plummer would. (He spits off disgustedly.) Nope, safest place for Ringo is in the pen and I aim to get him there all in one Piece. Time he gets out Luke Plummer will of picked a fight with the wrong man and it'll all blow over.

BUCK
(looking at Curly with astonishment). Well I'll be doggoned! I done you an injury, Curly. I thought you was after the reward.

CURLY
(reproachfully). Why the Kid's old man and me was friends. (He stares off at the horizon.) Besides I can use that five hundred in gold.

In the stagecoach the passengers are seated in the same positions as during the morning. The heat is stifling, and dust drifts in through the open windows. The coach jolts and jounces as it whirls along at fourteen miles an hour. Gatewood is playing the indignant man-of-affairs while Doc searches for a bottle in Peacock's sample case.

GATEWOOD
I can't get over the impertinence of that young lieutenant! I'll make it warm for that shavetail! I'll report him to Washington! We pay taxes to the government and what do we get? Not even protection from the Army!

Doc pulls a bottle from the sample-case and holds it up to Peacock ingratiatingly.

DOC BOONE
Mind, Reverend?

PEACOCK
I.....(coughing mournfully) It's not your fault, doctor, you're addicted to the vice. It's the fault of men like me.

Gatewood disregards the interruption and continues blowing off.

GATEWOOD
I don't know what the government's coming to! Instead of protecting business men, it's poking its nose into business. Why they're talking now about having bank examiners.... (snorting)....as if we didn't know how to run our own banks. I actually had a letter, doctor, from some popinjay official saying they were going to inspect my books!

DOC BOONE
(lowering the bottle from his mouth with delight). Aaaahh!

Gatewood directs his attention to Hatfield and Peacock as being the only responsible gentlemen.

GATEWOOD
I have a program, gentlemen, that should be blazoned on every newspaper in the country. America for Americans! Don't let the government meddle with business! Reduce taxes! Our national debt is shocking- - - over a billion dollars! What the country nees is a business man for President!

DOC BOONE
(amiably holding up the bottle). What the country nees is more of this.

Ringo grins and Gatewood regards Boone frostily.

GATEWOOD
You're drunk, sir.

DOC BOONE
I'm happy, Gatewood. (Serenely.) In my youth I was an unhappy man, oppressed by the sorrows of the world. I looked about me and saw that life was a hopeless tragedy.But I found a way out. (Tapping the bottle) Fuddle!

Peacock twists his hands and his voice quivers with feeling.

PEACOCK
Oh doctor, doctor, I can't bear to hear you going on like that. You're a fine man, besotted by that poison. It's on my conscience!

DOC BOONE
(kindly). What you need, my friend, is a little fuddle.

PEACOCK
(excitedly). I'll never sell it again! No matter what Agatha says, I'll never sell it again! Let me save you, doctor!

Before Boone can realize what is going on,Peacock has seized the bottle and flung it out the window. Then Peacock grabs up his sample case to fling it out, but Doc grabs it. There is a momentary turmoil in the stagecoach as the other men try to quiet them. Finally Doc gets possession of the sample case and Peacock is pushed back into his seat by Ringo and Hatfield.

The scene dissolves to views of the Stagecoach winding through different country, of the horses struggling up a mountain grade as the disc of the sun is riding the summit of the hills beyond; of the horses struggling as they pull the coach, Buck chucking stones at them and yelling, urging them on.

In the stagecoach, the passengers look weary and their shoulders are covered with dust. Lucy is in obvious distress, looking very ill and worn out. Hatfield sits back, his hat shading his eyes, his gaze on Lucy. Doc Boone is blissfully asleep and snoring. Peacock sits stiff and miserable- - - a wispy little man. Gatewood peers out anxiously. A terrific lurch of the stage wakes the sleepers and throws Lucy over on Gatewood's shoulder. She stifles a sound of pain and straightens up with difficulty, Gatewood helping her.

HATFIELD
(angrily). Blast that driver! Why doesn't he watch where he's going?

Dallas leans across Gatewood sympathetically and ventures for the first time to address Lucy.

DALLAS
Wouldn't you like me to sit beside you? You could lean on my shoulder. You look so tired.

Lucy pulls herself together and her cool tone rebuffs the girl.

LUCY
No, thank you.

Dallas shrinks back into her seat, flushing. A closeup of Ringo shows him looking puzzled in Lucy's direction, and a closeup of Lucy shows her biting her lip and turning her face away from Ringo, looking out the window at nothing.

Hatfield, seen with the group, looks at Lucy anxiously.

HATFIELD
How are you feeling Mrs. Mallory?

LUCY
Is there any water?

RINGO
I got a canteen, ma'am.

While he is getting out his canteen Peacock speaks with a shy, nervous cough.

PEACOCK
Ahem- - - when do we reach Apache Wells?

GATEWOOD
Sundown, the driver said.

DOC BOONE
We'll soon be there.

Ringo offers the canteen to Lucy, but Hatfield reaches out and takes it.

HATFIELD
One moment, Mrs. Mallory.

He produces a small silver cup from his cloak and fills it from the canteen, then offers it to Lucy. She drains it gratefully, and looks at the cup, following which a close view of the cup discloses a crest on it and a Latin inscription: "Ad astra per aspera." Then a close view of Lucy reveals her looking at the cup and trying to recall something from her memory. Finally, she looks at Hatfield.

LUCY
I'm trying to remember where I saw that inscription. Wasn't it Ashburn Manor?

Hatfield's face is masked as he replies.

HATFIELD
I wouldn't know, Mrs. Mallory. You see, I - - - I won that cup on a wager.

The group comes into view, and now Ringo is holding the canteen and waiting for the cup, but Lucy hands it across to Hatfield instead of to Ringo, and Hatfield is pocketing the cup as Ringo speaks.

RINGO
How about the other lady?

Hatfield says nothing and Ringo extends the canteen to Dallas.

RINGO
Sorry I haven't got a silver cup.

DALLAS
(quickly). I like it better this way. (She puts the canteen to her lips.)

The scene dissolves to the Apache Wells Station at sundown as the stage comes lurching through the gate and stops in the wide yard. The coach is covered with dust and the horses are lathered. Several Mexican vaqueros come running from the corral and take the bridles of the lead horses, speaking in Mexican amongst themselves. From the doorway of the main building comes the station manager, a pot-bellied Mexican named Chris. Buck and Curly jump down from the box, and Buck is full of that joy which follows averted danger. Curly opens the door to let the passengers out and Buck greets Chris gleefully.

BUCK
Howdy, Chris. Seven hours from Dry Fork. That's fast driving, amigo!

Buck doesn't notice that Chris is standing with his mouth open, too amazed to speak.

CURLY
(as the passengers climb out). Get the folks a bite to eat, Chris, while we change horses. We're pushin' right on to Lordsburg.

But Chris just stands there staring as the passengers get out in a cheerful huddle.

CHRIS
(finding his tongue at last). You come without soldiers?

BUCK
(a hero). Sure, we wasn't scared. Never seen an Apache, did we, Curly?

CURLY
(ignoring Buck). Where's the cavalry, Chris?

BUCK
Yeah, where is the soldiers?

Buck, Curly and Chris are seen together now, forming a group. Buck's jubilant expression is rapidly fading as he looks more closely at Chris' uneasy face, and then Chris makes a helpless gesture with his hands.

CHRIS
Ain't no soldiers.

BUCK

Huh?

CHRIS

Soldiers gone.

The group now consists of the passengers, Chris, Curly and Buck. Ringo glances at Dallas but her expression shows nothing, Gatewood blanches, Peacock lets out a moan, Doc Boone is philosophical, and Lucy pushes forward, her face taut. Then she is seen closer with Chris as she confronts the little Mexican, and for the first time she shows signs of cracking up.

LUCY

Where's Captain Mallory? Where's my husband? Where is he?

CHRIS

You his wife- - - I think?

LUCY

(frantically). Yes, where is he? Did he go with his men?

CHRIS

Si, senora. (He motions toward the hills.) Leetle- - - what you call it - - - skirmish - - - with Apaches last night. (Hesitantly) Soldiers take Captain Mallory to Lordsburg- - - I think. He get - - - hurt, maybe.

LUCY

(standing very still). Badly?

CHRIS

Well.....yes, senora.

The group shot now forms a tableau for a moment, and Lucy's shock overshadows for the time their own disaster. Buck is speechless anyway. Dallas, her heart going out to Lucy, steps forward and puts a hand on her arm.

DALLAS

Mrs. Mallory, let me.....

LUCY

(pulling her arm free, her voice firm). I'm all right, thank you.

Hatfield steps to her side gallantly and she takes his arm to steady herself. Ringo seesthe look in Dallas' eyes and steps to her side, putting his arm over her shoulder, The others just stand there helplessly until Curly takes command.

CURLY
Inside, everybody! Inside!

The scene dissolves to the Lunch Room as the group enters. It is a fairly large room with bare whitewashed walls, a bar at one side, several tables and chairs, Lucy comes forward, through the door that leads to the yard, on Hatfield's arm. She looks terribly sick but is fighting for strength and self-control. Behind them come Peacock, Doc gripping his arm and carrying the sample case; Dallas and Ringo, followed by Gatewood lugging his heavy valise; and finally Buck and Curly. Doc goes straight to the bar, while Hatfield brings Lucy to a table, and pulls out a chair, full of concern for her.

HATFIELD
Sit down, Mrs. Mallory. I'll get you a a glass of water.

He turns away to the bar, disappearing from view. Lucy gropes for the chair, fighting for self-control, and then putting her hand to her head collapses in a dead faint. The group stands petrified for a moment, Doc with a drink in his hand. Dallas goes straight to the fallen girl and drops on her knees beside her. Hatfield hurries from the bar and stoops down with a glass of water. The others converge on the unconscious girl.

Lucy is now concealed from view by the huddle of bodies, all peering down. Curly pushes through and stoops, picking up Lucy in his arms as though she were a child while Doc, balancing his drink carefully, peers at her. Curly jerks his head at Doc as he starts for the door at the far side which leads into a passage off which are bedrooms.

CURLY
Come on, Doc.

The scene moves with them to the passage door as Curly carries Lucy through it, followed by Dallas and Doc Boone, the latter still carefully balancing his drink and walking none too steadily.

Gatewood, Hatfield, Ringo, Buck and Peacock all stand in an awkward huddle, not knowing what to do. But Peacock, father of five, knows the signs and he breaks the tense silence with a shy little cough.

PEACOCK
Poor woman, I wonder if ....

GATEWOOD
A sick woman on our hands! That's all we needed!

Hatfield gives him a savage look but says nothing. Buck clears a frog out of his throat.

BUCK
I - - - I feel kinda sick myself.

GATEWOOD
(raging). We're in a fine fix, my friends. It's a fine country we're living in. The Army has no right to leave a public place like this undefended!

RINGO
Looks to me like the Army's got its hands pretty full, mister.

The passage door opens and Dallas comes out followed by Curly. Curly looks stunned and for the first time unequal to a situation. A close view of the others shows them all looking at Curly and Dallas. Chris joins the group of men.

HATFIELD
(breaking the tension sharply as Dallas approaches them, Curly following her). How is she?

Dallas doesn't answer him, but turns to Chris.

DALLAS
Have you a wife?

CHRIS
Si, senora.

DALLAS
Call her. (Turning to Ringo) Go into the kitchen, please. Make some water hot.

RINGO
Yes, ma'am.

DALLAS
We'll need lots of water .... clean water.

She goes toward the passage door again, leaving the men standing in stunned silence. Only Chris moves, and he goes toward the yard door.

At the passage door, as Dallas goes through the door, Doc Boone comes out, walking with concentration on his balance and care not to spill the drink which he still has in his glass. He heads forward and past the thunderstruck group of men - - - Gatewood, Peacock, Hatfield, Buck and Curly. As he passes them toward the bar, Hatfield looks after him with a kind of repressed fury.

HATFIELD
A fine member of the medical profession!
Drunken swine!

At the bar, a close view shows Doc carefully pouring his drink back into the bottle, driving in the cork and setting the bottle aside. Only then does he turn, steadying himself on the bar, and his face appears full of purpose.

DOC BOONE
Get me coffee - - - lots of coffee - - -
and black!

At the yard door Chris is now standing in the doorway, yelling out for his wife: "Yakima! Yakima! ... Pronto!" and then the view dissolves into the kitchen where Ringo, his sleeves rolled up, is shoving sticks of wood into the glowing range, and kettles and a dishpan filled with water are already beginning to steam. On one corner of the range is a huge coffee pot. Curly has Doc in a kitchen chair near this corner. Doc drains a tin cup and Curly refills it from the coffee pot.

CURLY
That makes four, Doc.

Doc drains the tin cup, his face purpling with the effort, but he holds out the cup manfully again.

DOC BOONE
More, and blacker!

CURLY
(looking apprehensive). Ain't that
enough? You'll bust.

DOC BOONE
Keep 'er comin', Curly!
(Curly splashes the cup to the brim
again and Doc puts it to his lips heroically,
gasping with the effort.)

In the lunch room, the other men are now seated around a large pine table. Hatfield is nervously cutting his deck of cards, testing his luck by some scheme of his own. Peacock is twiddling his thumbs helplessly. Buck is mournfully rattling his pocketful of stone, looking extremely uneasy. Gatewood is angrily biting at a sandwich. Chris is coming to the table with another plate of sandwiches. All at once Peacock, who is almost facing the open yard door looks up from his thumb-twiddling and leaps to his feet with a blood-curdling yell.

PEACOCK
Savages!

The men all look up startled. Buck nearly jumps out of his skin, spilling some stones from his pocket. The others get to their feet.

In the Yard Doorway stands a full-blooded Apache girl,not without a trace of savage beauty. She stands there like an evil shadow, her eyes darting around at the strangers. At the table Peacock tries to get behind Buck and Buck tries to get behind Peacock, and neither succeeds. Chris tries to calm them.

CHRIS
That's my wife - - - my squaw - - -
Yakima.

Peacock's voice is in a high key as he quavers to Chris.

PEACOCK
But she - - - she's a savage.

CHRIS
Si, senor, she's leetle bit savage - -
- - - - - I think.

The Apache girl slips into the room with the grace of a snake. Chris makes a motion toward the bedroom door and addresses her as though she were a chattel, speaking in Mexican. The men all watch her until she has vanished through the passage door. Then Gatewood turns sternly on Chris.

GATEWOOD
There's something about this. That girl's an Apache!

BUCK
Yeah. (He clears a frog out of his throat.)

CHRIS
Sure, she's one of Geronimo's people - - - I think. (Grinning) Maybe not so bad to have Apache wife. Apaches don't bother me - - - I think.

Buck and Peacock have sunk down into their chairs again, and Buck's voice is wheezy as he clears his throat.

BUCK
I hope her family don't come.

CHRIS
I buy Yakima for two horses. Of course she don't like me much - - - I think. She like big Apache buck, maybe.

Suddenly they all look toward the kitchen door as it is heard opening. - - - Doc Boone enters, followed by Curly. Doc Boone is different man now, a good professional man, sober as a judge. They cross to the passage door and Curly opens the door for Doc.

CURLY
Go on in there, Doc, and save them two lives. (He shuts the door behind Doc.)

They are all looking at the door where Doc vanished. Then Curly approaches them slowly and sits down heavily in the only unoccupied chair. They all sit there waiting for what is going to happen as the scene fades out.

PART TWO

The kitchen fades in. It is night, hours later, and an oil lamp on the wall near the stove lights the room dimly. Yakima, the squaw, enters from the passage on moccasined feet and crosses to the stove. She dips a gourdful of water from a pail on the floor and pours it into a kettle on the stove. Suddenly she lifts her head listening, and looking toward the rear door, the upper half of which stands open to the moonlit night. Then she softly glides to the half door and stands looking out and listening. The lamplight behind her, the moonlight on her face, Yakima, now seen close, seems to hear something significant although nothing but the stamp and shuffle of horses in the corral can be heard.

Three slinking figures emerge from the shadows at the corral. It is the vaqueros. They lift a bar and lead three horses out, dropping the bar soundlessly into place again. Noiselessly they climb into the saddles. A closeup of Yakima at the Kitchen Door shows her listening, a curious smile glinting in her black eyes.

In the lunch room, sitting around the table, are Curly, Buck, Peacock, Ringo, Gatewood, Hatfield and Chris, and Hatfield is dealing cards around. All at once there is a thudding of horses past the window and out through the gate. They all jump up except Peacock and run to the two windows, Curly grabbing up his rifle. Buck's voice rises above the excitement as they peer out into the night.

BUCK
It's them vaqueros! They've run away!

The scene dissolves to a beautiful view of the full moon rising over mountains - - - a long, lonely vista, the silence of which is broken by the long-drawn-out howl of a coyote. Then two Coyotes are seen silhouetted against the moon on a rise of ground; they lift their muzzles and the mournful cry is heard again.

In the lunch room the men are now sitting around with their hands shoved into their pockets in various postures, too worried even to play cards now. There is a candle stuck in a bottle on the table. The cards lie strewn about. Chris enters from the bar and sets a bottle on the table, Hatfield pours himself a drink. Curly sucks gloomily at his pipe. Buck nervously rattles the stones in his pocket. Peacock clasps and unclasps his hands, sweat standing out on his pale forehead. Ringo is rolling a cigarette. The howl of a coyote is heard again. Then the sound merges into a high thin wail much louder than the coyote's and they all hunch up listening.

BUCK
Them coyotes gimme the creeps. They sound jest like....(again the high wail, louder)....jest like a baby.

This time the wail is unmistakably a newborn baby's squall of greeting to life and they all get up as if on strings, turning to watch the passage door.

And now Dallas stands at the Passage Doorway, the little bundle of wailing life wrapped in a bigger bundle of blanket. The last trace of hardness has vanished from Dallas as she holds the infant in her arms, and there is a glow of wonder in her face. She stands a moment in the doorway, a smile in her eyes, then comes into the big room. Then the scene draws back to include the men who crowd around Dallas in awe, all trying to peer into the bundle. Buck is completely overcome and he goes on like a wheezy phonograph.

BUCK
Well I'll be doggoned! Well I'll be doggoned!

Dallas' voice is as proud as if the child were her own, her smile tender and maternal.

DALLAS
It's a little girl.

BUCK
Well I'll be doggoned!

Curly puts out a careful finger and touches the baby as if he weren't sure it was real. Then he throws back his head in a shout of laughter, the only way he can relieve his feelings, and he claps Buck on the back hilariously.

CURLY
You got another passenger, Buck!

Again he roars with laughter, and everyone is smiling now except Hatfield, who touches Dallas' arm, his eyes intense with anxiety.

HATFIELD
How is she? How is Mrs. Mallory?

DALLAS
She's going to be all right.

A closeup of Ringo shows him looking at her; and Dallas, seen close with the baby in her arms, is beautiful with the lamplight glowing on her face.

The men are then seen crowded around Dallas and the baby as through the passage door behind her comes Doc Boone, weary with the strain and terribly sober. He seems unaware of all the excitement and enthusiasm as he heads past the men for the bar but Curly slaps him on the back boisterously as he passes.

CURLY
Three cheers for old Doc Boone!

Buck grabs Curly's arm and indicates the passage door.

BUCK
Sssssh! Quiet!

Doc comes to the bar, and methodically, as if he had just been interrupted a minute ago instead of many hours, he takes down his bottle, uncorks it and pours out the drink which he poured back when all this began. His face is gray and lined. He downs the drink and refills his glass. Curly, Buck, Hatfield and Peacock approach jubilantly and line up at the bar beyond Doc. Doc silently pushes the bottle toward them, and Chris goes behind the bar and sets out glasses. Curly and Buck are hilarious. Hatfield is pleased and aloof. Peacock is excited and fluttery. Doc Boone disregards them and seems unaware of anything except his own weariness. As Chris fills the glasses Peacock leans on the bar politely.

PEACOCK
Water, please. Just water.

Chris shoves a water pitcher toward him.

CHRIS
Here you are, padre...

Chris fills a glass for himself and Curly raises his own glass exuberantly.

CURLY
Well, boys, here's to the new traveler!

BUCK
What'll we christen her?

PEACOCK
(beaming as he lifts his glass of water). My wife's name is Agatha - - - (He coughs shyly.) I always thought it was a pretty name.

CURLY
She's born at Apache Wells. Let's call her Little Apache.

BUCK
(laughing). She ain't no Indian.

CURLY
(laughing). You thought she was a coyote.

BUCK
(triumphantly). Let's call her Little Coyote.

Curly lets out a roar of laughter and slaps Buck on the back. They all lift their glasses.

CURLY
Come on, boys, here's to Little Coyote!

The scene dissolves to the Kitchen where Gatewood has set down his valise and stepped over to the pail of spring water on the floor. He takes up a ladleful of water for a drink. The Apache girl, who has been standing in the shadows, glides over and picks up his valise. Gatewood sees her and dashes the ladleful of water hard into her face. She drops the bag with a thump and looks at him with murder in her eyes as he growls.

GATEWOOD
Keeps your hands off!

The scene dissolves to the station yard affording a close view of Ringo, who leans against a wagon wheel or a fence or a tree, smoking a cigarette and looking thoughtful as the moonlight falling through branches of the tree makes a pattern of light and shadow across him. But something catches his eye. At the station house a shaft of lamplight pours out on the ground as the door is opened and Dallas steps out, closing the door behind her. She too is caught up in a mood, and comes walking forward.

Ringo shields the glow of his cigarette in the palm of his hand and his gaze follows Dallas. She walks past Ringo within a few paces, not seeing him, her figure bright in the moonlight. She vanishes through the gate.

With a quick motion Ringo flings away his cigarette and starts to follow her, but stops short as his name is whispered from close at hand. Chris steps out of the shadows and comes close to him, his manner secretive. The boy looks at Chris, wondering what is up.

CHRIS
(in a low, warning voice). I know why you go to Lordsburg, Kid. I like you. If you know who's there you stay away - - - I think.

RINGO
(guardedly). You mean Luke Plummer?

CHRIS
(holding up three fingers warningly). Luke - - - Ike - - - Hank - - - all there together.

A wild shine comes into Ringo's eyes and he grips Chris' arm eagerly.

RINGO
You sure of that? (As Chris nods, Ringo's eyes laugh.) Thanks, Chris. That's all I wanted to know.

CHRIS
You crazy if you go - - - I think. You stay away, Kid. Three against one no good.

From the house Curly's voice is now calling, "Hey, Chris! Chris!" and the pot-bellied Mexican slips out of sight toward the yard door. Ringo turns and looks again at the gate where Dallas vanished and then steps off lightly to follow her.

The scene dissolves to a beautiful view of a Hillside, some distance from the station. Dallas emerges from the shadows and comes out into the moonlight, looking out over the desert, ghostly in its vast expanse. Her experience of the last few hours has deeply affected her, taken all the defiance out of her face, and softened it into beauty. Thoughts of what she might have been seem to be crowding into her heart as she stares off at the scene. And now behind her appears Ringo; he comes around a rock and approaches her. She turns, startled, but his voice is casual.

RINGO
You oughtn't go too far, Miss Dallas. Apaches like to sneak up and pick off strays.

As she doesn't answer, he comes abreast of her and they stand looking off to the far, moonlit mountain ranges.

RINGO
I watched you with that baby - - - that other woman's baby. You looked - - - (he can't find the words)- - - well, nice.

She sits down on a rock without replying and he sits down beside her and takes off his hat, swinging it idly between his knees. Neither looks at the other.

RINGO
You visiting in Lordsburg?

She gives him a quick glance and then looks away again.

DALLAS
No, I - - - I have friends there.

He picks up a handful of pebbles and idly chucks one away. Suddenly Dallas turns to him and her pent-up thoughts come out with a rush.

DALLAS
Why don't you escape, Kid? Why don't you escape?

RINGO
(chucking another stone). I aim to Miss Dallas - - - in Lordsburg.

DALLAS
Why Lordsburg? Why don't you get over the Border?

Ringo weighs a pebble in his hand, not looking at her, and his voice is full of unshakeable purpose.

RINGO
My father and brother was shot down by the Plummers. I guess you don't know how it feels to lose your own folks that way. (He chucks a stone.)

Dallas looks off over the moonlit plains and her voice is dull and flat.

DALLAS
My people were killed by the Indians. I was just a kid. There was a massacre in the Superstition Mountains.

He looks at her in surprise, but she is looking off at her own dismal childhood.

RINGO
That's tough, on a girl. It's a hard country.

DALLAS
You have to live, no matter what happens.

RINGO
(chucking a stone somberly). Yeah, that's it.

They look off for a moment, deep in their own thoughts, Ringo trying to muster courage to express what he feels. Finally he turns to her and his voice, at first awkward and halting, grows in emotion.

RINGO
Look, Miss Dallas - - - you got no folks - - - neither have I. Maybe I'm crazy to ask you - - - but - - - well- - - I still got a ranch across the Border. It's a nice place- - - trees- - -grass- - - a house half built. You see I'm asking - - - well, what I mean is - - - a man could live there - - - and a woman. (He looks at her helplessly, exhausted by the effort, and mistakes her tear-bright eyes for rebuke.) Oh, I guess I'm crazy- - - bein' close to you like this.

Dallas looks at him as if she can't believe her own ears.

DALLAS
You don't know me! You don't know who I am!

RINGO
I know all I want to know. You're the kind of girl a man wants to marry.

Dallas tries to resist the rush of feeling that possesses her, but he takes her hand in his. Suddenly there is a crashing sound and Ringo springs up and faces back. Curly is seen striding toward Ringo, his voice gruff with suspicion.

CURLY
What you doin' out here, Kid? (He sees Dallas.) Oh it's you, Dallas. (He steps up to Ringo, his voice stern.) You come along. Stick close to the reservation.

The scene fades out.

PART THREE

A room at Apache wells fades in. It is early next morning and all the men are bunked down on the floor in various positions. Gatewood has appropriated the bunk. Doc Boone has his head on the drummer's sample case. Peacock is curled up in a corner, completely swathed in a quilt. Curly and Ringo sleep side by side and we are not yet aware that the marshal has manacled his ankle to Ringo's. Hatfield looks elegant even in sleep. Buck is snoring. The door pushes open violently and Chris shakes Curly.

CHRIS
Curly!

Curly, sits up, half awake, and looks at Chris' round eyes as he grunts.

CURLY
What's wrong, Chris?

CHRIS
(excitedly). My wife, Yakima. She run away. When I wake up she's - - - (making a wide gesture with his hand) - - - gone.

Curly growls at him reassuringly as Peacock sits up nervously with the quilt draped around his shoulders, and the other men are getting to their feet.

CURLY
The way you bust in here you'd think we was bein' attacked. You can find another wife, Chris.

CHRIS
Sure I find another wife; But she take my rifle and my horse! I never sell her, I love her so much. She carry me all day and never get tired!

BUCK
Your wife?

CHRIS
My horse! Find wife easy, yes, but not horse like that!

GATEWOOD
I knew that woman was a thief.

He has been sitting up in his bunk and the words are no sooner out of his mouth than an awful thought hits him. He leaps from the bunk with a cry and stumbles about the room, flinging off blankets.

CURLY
What's the matter with you, Gatewood?

GATEWOOD
My valise! Where's my valise?

Buck pull a blanket off his pillow, uncovering the valise.

BUCK
Here. I been usin' it for a pillow. Thought you wouldn't mind.

Gatewood grabs it with a shaking hand and glares at Buck.

GATEWOOD
Didn't I tell you to keep your hands off my things?

During this we see why Ringo has not risen, for Curly has thrown off the blankets and is unlocking the manacle that unites their ankles. Ringo gets to his feet and stretches. An awful thought hits Buck, and he turns on Curly nervously.

BUCK
Say, if that Yakima finds a bunch of Apaches she'll bring 'em right back here.

HATFIELD
(quietly). That's what I'm thinking.

CHRIS
My wife's people they won't bother me- - - I think.

BUCK
(wheezily) They bother me.

DOC BOONE
(who has got stiffly to his feet). Bar open, Chris?

GATEWOOD
(impatiently). What are we wasting time for? Let's make a break for it.

HATFIELD
(staring at him coldly). We got a delicate woman to consider.

GATEWOOD
Well, do you want her to stay here and be butchered, with the rest of us?

CURLY
Now quiet down, boys, we ain't butchered yet. But you're right- - - we'd better get goin' for Lordsburg soon as we can. (He turns to Doc who is at the door headed barwards.) Doc, take a look at the patient.

BUCK
Yeah, and Little Coyote.

In the bedroom: Lucy Mallory is propped up on pillows, holding her baby to her breast while Dallas is brushing Lucy's hair. The door opens and Boone comes in and addresses Mrs. Mallory cheerily.

DOC BOONE
Good morning. You're looking chipper today. (He looks at Dallas.) You're up early, Dallas.

Dallas smiles and Mrs. Mallory looks at her; Dallas seems transfigured.

LUCY
She didn't go to bed, Doctor. I'm afraid she sat up all night, while I slept.

DALLAS
Oh I slept in the chair a lot.

Lucy looks at her, knowing better, and Boone chuckles.

DOC BOONE
I'll bet you did.

DALLAS
Well it was nice to stay awake and hold the baby. (She pulls back the coverlet to show the baby.) Look, Doctor- - - isn't she a dear?

DOC BOONE
(poking the baby). We've got to get you to Lordsburg, Little Coyote. (He chuckles as Lucy looks at him, puzzled.) That's what the boys christened her last night from the way she squalled. Little Coyote. (He takes Lucy's wrist, feeling her pulse.) How do you feel?

LUCY
Fine, Doctor. A bit tired. (Then anxiously) Do you think my husband...

DOC BOONE
(cheerily). Now you're not to think about that. The best medicine he can have is to see you two safe and sound. You make up your mind to get there.

LUCY
(quietly). I have, Doctor.

DOC BOONE
That's the talk. (He lays her wrist down and pats her pillows back.) You need more strength. Rest all you can. Dallas, maybe you can fix up some broth.

LUCY
(indicating a plate and cup on a chair). She has already.

DOC BOONE
Good! (to Dallas) That Indian girl isn't around. How about some coffee for the boys?

DALLAS
I've got water on the stove.

She goes to the door, hesitating as if she wished to speak with the doctor further. But he is patting the pillows and fixing the coverlet as Dallas goes out.

DOC BOONE
Try and sleep for a while, little lady. (He beams at her teasingly.) And don't look so proud. I've brought hundreds of 'em into the world and each new one is always the prettiest.

In the Passage Outside Lucy's Bedroom, Dallas is waiting as Doc Boone comes out and shuts the door. He comes to her and she stops him, her voice low and intense.

DALLAS
Ringo asked me to marry him. Is it wrong, for a girl like me? (He stares astonished and she catches his arm.) If a man and woman are in love it's all right, isn't it, Joe? Tell me it's all right.

DOC BOONE
You're going to get hurt, child, worse than you've ever been hurt. Don't you know that boy's headed back to prison? (she is silent and he goes on.) Second place, if you two go into Lordsburg together he's going to find out all about you.

DALLAS
(quietly). He's not going into Lordsburg. (After a pause) All I want is for you to tell me I'm right.

Old Boone looks at her with a depth of understanding. There is something regretful in his eyes which see that Dallas is on ice that is too thin.

DOC BOONE
Who am I to tell you what's right or wrong, child? Go ahead if you can do it.

Tears are almost in her eyes as she squeezes his hand and whispers.

DALLAS
Thanks, Joe.

She hurries away from him down the passageway. He looks after her a moment and then goes through the passage door into the lunchroom.

In the lunchroom, Curly, Buck, Ringo, Gatewood, Peacock, Hatfield and Chris are gathered around the bar in a tensely waiting group. They all watch Boone as he comes across to them.

CURLY
Well, Doc?

DOC BOONE
Both doing fine. She's a real soldier's wife, that young lady.

GATEWOOD
(eagerly to Curly). That means we can go.

Chris has slid a bottle to Doc and Boone is pouring a drink.

DOC BOONE
Not for a day or so, if you want my professional opinion.

GATEWOOD
What do you mean a day?

DOC BOONE
A stagecoach is hard traveling. Give her a little time to gain strength.

BUCK
(plaintively). Gosh, we oughta get going.

PEACOCK
(clasping his hands nervously). I've had five children- - - (coughing)--- I mean my dear wife has - - - and - - - much as I dislike to say it in this hour of our trial, I - - - ahem- - - I believe the doctor is right.

DOC BOONE
Spoken like a man, Reverend.(Then to Curly) Of course if you say we've got to start I can't hold out against you.

GATEWOOD
I say we've got to get out of here before the Apaches find us. That's common sense!

HATFIELD
(looking at him icily). Nobody is going to endanger that lady and child.

GATEWOOD
(irritably). What do you mean danger? Aren't we in worse danger here?

CURLY
If we argue this thing out right we'll get somewhere. Now let's all sit down and talk sensible.

DOC BOONE
(tapping Curly's arm as they start pulling out chairs). Do you need Ringo in this confab?

CURLY
(gruffly). The kid does as I do.

DOC BOONE
(to Ringo). In that case you better make yourself useful, my boy. There's a young woman out in the kitchen needs help. She's making coffee.

RINGO
Thanks, Doc. (Ringo goes out as they all draw up chairs and begin sitting down for their council.)

Dallas is at the range in the Kitchen making coffee in the big pot. Beyond her is the door to the lunch room. She takes up a paper sack and is spooning coffee into the pot as Ringo enters from the lunch room. He comes over and stops a little behind her. She pretends not to notice him. He stands there awkwardly for a moment and then speaks, self-consciously polite.

RINGO
Mornin'.

DALLAS
Good morning. (She goes on measuring the coffee into the pot.)

RINGO
(shifting his weight hesitantly). I laid awake most the night wondering what you'da said if Curly hadn't busted in. (She spoons the coffee into the pot without turning and he tries to make conversation.) Guess you was up too. I could hear you movin'around.

Coffee sack in hand, she turns to go back in to the kitchen cupboard, but he blocks her way.

RINGO
(a little awkwardly as they look at each other). You didn't answer what I asked you last night.

DALLAS
(her voice growing urgent as the words pour out). Why don't you escape, Kid? There's a horse out there in the corral. Curly won't go after you- - - he can't leave the passengers in this fix!

RINGO
But I got to go to Lordsburg. Won't you go to my ranch and wait for me?

DALLAS
(bitterly). Wait for a dead man? (With intensity) I talked with Chris - - - you haven't got a chance and you know it. It was three against one when the Plummers swore you killed their foreman and got you sent up. It'll be three against one in Lordsburg.

RINGO
(He can't think of anything to say and she moves past him into the cupboard. His perplexed gaze follows her.) There's some things a man just can't run away from.

Dallas puts the coffee sack on a shelf and turns, desperate to find some way to change his purpose.

DALLAS
How can you talk about your life and my life when you're throwing 'em away? (Vehemently as he comes to her) Yes, mine too! That's what you're throwin' away if you go to Lordsburg!

RINGO
(helplessly). What do you want me to do?

DALLAS
(Pleadingly). Would it make us any happier if Luke Plummer was dead? One of his brothers would be after you with a gun. We'd never be safe. I don't want that kind of a life, Kid.

RINGO
(slowly). I don't see what else I can do.

DALLAS
Go now - - - get away- - - forget Lordsburg- - - forget the Plummers. Make for the Border and I'll come!

A close-up of the two of them shows him looking at her intense pleading face for a long moment.

RINGO
You mean that?

DALLAS
I do, I do!

RINGO
Won't you come along with me?

DALLAS
I can't leave Mrs. Mallory and her baby. I'll come to you from Lordsburg. I swear it.

Ringo tries to adjust his mind to this tremendous change. He looks around the room at the half door at the rear which leads out to the corral. Then he looks at Dallas again.

RINGO
I oughta have my rifle.

DALLAS
(eagerly). I got it for you last night, while you were all asleep.

He stares at her in wonderment as she reaches behind the cupboard and gets his rifle.

RINGO
(as he takes it). You thought of this last night?

DALLAS
Yes, don't ask any more questions, not now! There'll be time for that!

Hurriedly she gets a box of cartridges from the cupboard where she has secreted them. Ringo can't take his eyes from her excited face. She is a complete astonishment to him, this strange girl.

Curly is now in the Lunch room holding council around a large pine table, facing Gatewood, Buck, Hatfield, Boone and Peacock, who sits with his hands meekly clasped. Doc Boone is humming pleasurably while he takes stock of Peacock's sample case, which is open on the table before him. Chris stands by listening, still in a bad humor about his wife's thievery. Buck raises his voice plaintively.

BUCK
There ain't no Apaches behind us, Curly. We can still go back.

GATEWOOD
(hitting the table with his fist). No!

CURLY
What do you think, Chris?

CHRIS
Geronimo between here and Lordsburg - - - I think.

DOC BOONE
(raising his voice in song.) "Ten thousand cattle gone astray- - -"

BUCK
Doc, for heaven's sake! (Doc stops and looks at him inquiringly.) This is a serious matter, ain't it?

DOC BOONE
(patting the sample case).
My dear Buck, if I had but one hour more to live I would try to enjoy it. Now leave me out of your council of war. I'm taking inventory and don't wish to be disturbed. (Pulling out a bottle) Aha- - - Bourbon!

PEACOCK
(meekly). That's twenty years old, Doctor, bottled in bond, very good stuff. But- - - ahem- - - it hurts my conscience to think that I'm

contributing to your insobriety.
Not that I begrudge you my samples...

BUCK
Aw shut up! (To all, quaveringly)
We got a problem on our hands and
nobody's talking any sense except me.

CURLY
You shut up! (To the others) Once we
cross that ferry we'll be all right.
Don't you think so, Chris?

CHRIS
(nodding). Si- - - I think.

CURLY
The question is, what we gonna do
about the lady and her baby.

HATFIELD
Doctor Boone has settled that for
us, suh. I demand respect for his
professional opinion.

DOC BOONE
(looking up in surprise at Hatfield).
Well, well, That coming from you,
Hatfield, is a genuine compliment.

At the corral, Ringo has already saddled a horse. Dallas holds the gate open and he leads the horse out by the bridle. She shuts the gate and comes to him.

He slides his rifle into the saddle-boot and stands ready to mount. They look at each other for a moment. They have no words for the things they feel. It is all in their eyes. Dallas is fighting back tears and a tightness in her throat.

RINGO
(finally). I'll be waitin'.

DALLAS
Watch out for Apaches.

RINGO
I'm all right on horseback.

He looks at her tongue-tied, and a powerful current flows between them. He reaches out and takes her hand and pulls her to him, then slips his arm around her as if to kiss her. But Dallas pushes herself off and her voice chokes as she speaks.

DALLAS
No, no, wait till I come to you- - -
when all this is behind us. (Her hand
sweeps the country as though it were
her past which still clung to her.)
It'll be a new life then.

Without a word he swings his leg over the saddle and jerks the reins. She catches the stirrup and walks along for a few feet; she almost leans on the stirrup for support.

DALLAS
They're all in the front room. Keep
going this way till you're out of
sight. (She lets go of stirrup and her
voice chokes.) Ride hard, Kid- - -
and take care of yourself for me.

He takes one last look at her, then digs his spurs into the mustang and the horse leaps forward.

Dallas stands looking off in his direction, lifting her arm in a little gesture, and then Ringo is seen galloping hard to the top of a rise a hundred feet away. But as he tops the rise, galloping straight forward, he suddenly sees something that makes him saw on the bit, and the horse rears to a dead stop as if it had four-wheel brakes.

Dallas is still standing with her arm half up in an uncompleted gesture. Terror comes into her face,and she cries out.

DALLAS
Don't stop! Go on, go on!

Then she starts running wildly forward, the scene dissolving to Ringo sitting on his horse, staring off past the rise as Dallas comes tearing up, still crying out to him wildly.

DALLAS
Ride, ride! Don't stop now! They've
heard you! Go on! Go on, Kid!

She has caught the stirrup again and begins flailing at the horse to make it move. But Ringo holds the bridle firm, quieting the horse with one hand, and with the other arm reaching down and pulling her up so she can see what he is looking at. She stops struggling, a closeup showing them looking off, and then we see what they see: From a distant summit a thin white spiral of smoke is rising into the still air. It is interruped sharply. Then another puff rises, like a telegraphic flash. Thereupon the scene moves swiftly to another point, and an answering puff of smoke floats up; then another. Following this the scene moves to the plain where, far off, a column of smoke shoots up into the air, as if released from a blanket. Then another puff rises.

A close view of Ringo and Dallas shows their heads turning as they scan the horizon. A look of despair comes into Dallas' eyes. Ringo's jaw tightens, and he lets her down to the ground. She stands there, beyond speech, beyond all hope now.

RINGO
(looking down at her). I can't leave you now, Dallas.

CURLY'S VOICE
Get 'em up, Kid!

Dallas turns as if a knife had touched her heart. Ringo doesn't turn or move in the saddle; he lifts his hands.

Curly comes striding in behind the horses, his gun drawn from its holster. He is hopping mad.

CURLY
Now get off that horse!

Ringo gets off, indifferent to Curly's anger. Curly slides his gun into its holster and takes out the handcuffs with which he had manacled Ringo during the night. Curly is so mad he is rough as he goes to put them on, but Ringo holds out his wrists calmly.

RINGO
You don't need to, Curly. I'm not running away.

CURLY
(an angry scowl). I'll say you ain't! (and he snaps the cuffs.)

RINGO
(nodding past Curly). Look at those hills.

Curly, suspicious, steps back a pace so he can still keep an eye on Ringo, and then looks off. An expression of consternation comes over his face as he grunts.

CURLY
Apaches?

RINGO
Yeah, war signals.

Curly grabs the bridle of the horse and gestures toward the station building.

CURLY
Get going!

They start back, Ringo, manacled, walking beside Dallas, who seems bereft of all life, as the scene dissolves.

The Stagecoach appears careening along, Buck driving to get all he can out of the horses, Curly alert with the rifle across his knees. Then we see Buck and Curly, and as the marshal is scanning the horizon, Buck without turning his attention from the horses calls to him.

BUCK
Don't you think you oughta take them cuffs off the Kid? He's mighty handy with a gun.

CURLY
(growling back loudly without turning his attention from the dangerous horizon). You drive them hosses!

In the Stagecoach the positions are now slightly changed. Lucy sits in the rear seat next to the window as before, but Dallas sits next to her, the bundled baby tight to her breast. Lucy leans on Dallas gratefully. Gatewood sits next to Dallas at the other rear window, and is watching out anxiously. In the front seat the three men are seated as before - - - Boone and Hatfield at the windows, with Peacock between them. Ringo has the same position on the floor, leant back against the door, his cuffed hands carelessly across his knees. Gatewood leans out the window and yells up at Buck.

GATEWOOD
Can't you drive any faster? (He pulls in his head and addresses the group.) We've got to make that ferry!

DOC BOONE
Drink, Gatewood?

GATEWOOD
(bitterly). A man works all his life to get hold of some money so he can enjoy life and then runs into a trap like this!

PEACOCK
(starting and leaning toward Gatewood nervously). Are we in a trap, Brother? Do you see any savages coming?

GATEWOOD
(yelping at him). No I don't see any savages coming. You don't see them coming. They're on top of you before you know it.

PEACOCK
Oh dear.

Gatewood, his fear making him belligerent, glares at Hatfield, who is sitting quietly in the corner diagonally opposite.

GATEWOOD
If you hadn't insisted on waiting for her - - - (indicating Lucy)- - - we'd have been across the ferry by this time.

HATFIELD
(his eyes burning). You talk too much, Gatewood.

GATEWOOD
(with a snap). Your threats don't faze me, Hatfield. You're nothing but a tinhorn gambler.

HATFIELD
(leaning forward, murder in his eye). How would you like to get out and walk?

GATEWOOD
You can't put me out of a public conveyance!

DOC BOONE
(placatingly). Gentlemen!

RINGO
Take it easy, Hatfield. (To Gatewood) Save your fighting, we may need it.

GATEWOOD
(angered by the boy's tone, looking at the handcuffs). You wouldn't be much good in a fight, jailbird. (Ringo just looks at him with a thin smile and says nothing.)

HATFIELD
(staring at Gatewood, his voice harsh). Lay off the Kid. I'm your potato if you want a scrap.

DOC BOONE
(looking admiringly at Hatfield as Gatewood glowers silently). During the late war, Hatfield, I set the leg of a Confederate and I learned to like him mighty well. I'm beginning to feel the same way about you.

GATEWOOD
You keep out of this!

DOC BOONE
(folding his hands on his plump belly and addressing the banker amiably). I'm also beginning to diagnose a bad disposition in you, my friend. Or maybe it's only dyspepsia. Or yet again you may have been an only child.

GATEWOOD
Shut up!

HATFIELD
(staring at Gatewood). I'll stand just about so much of this.

PEACOCK
(meekly). Please, gentlemen, let us have a little- - - ahem- - - Christian charity for one another.

The scene dissolves to a view of the Stagecoach toiling up a mountainous road; then to the Coach topping the rise and halting. Then we see Buck and Curly staring down toward the river with dismay. There is no ferry there. Only the thin cable across the water and the smoking ruins of the ferry wharf and boat are visible. A chimney stands among the ruins of the ferry house.

Buck, seen close with Curly, can hardly speak for fright.

BUCK
Is that - - - (clearing frog out of his throat) - - - the ferry?

CURLY
Go ahead!

The coach starts with a lurch as Gatewood, who is looking out the window, pulls in his head excitedly.

GATEWOOD
The ferry's burned!

All the men begin looking out, Ringo getting to his knees, looking over Boone's shoulder. They stare in stupefaction until Gatewood breaks the tense silence with his harsh outburst.

GATEWOOD
What's the Army doing? Where's the soldiers? Are they going to let Geronimo pillage and burn the whole country?

The scene dissolves to the water's edge as the stagecoach rolls in and the horses are pulled to a halt. Curly jumps down and opens the coach door while Buck holds the reins. Beyond the coach we see a pile of smoking timbers strewn to the water's edge.

As the passengers get out, leaving Dallas and Lucy inside, Gatewood, Boone, Ringo, Hatfield and Peacock gather around Curly. Gatewood's tone makes Curly responsible for the whole predicament.

GATEWOOD
What are we going to do now?

CURLY
We're gonna get across. (He takes out the cuff key and looks at Ringo.) We need them hands of yours, Kid. Will you give me your word you won't try to escape no more?

Ringo holds out his manacled wrists, looking straight into Curly's eyes.

RINGO
I give you my word - - - to Lordsburg.

Curly, in the act of unlocking the cuffs, puts the key back in his pocket. His voice is curt.

CURLY
Get back in the stage with them women!

Ringo doesn't turn, his wrists still out. Curly is staring at him scornfully. For a moment they fight each other with their eyes.

RINGO
I give you my word.

A close view at the window shows Dallas looking out at Ringo with wide eyes. Then the group appears, as seen from her angle: Curly has taken off the cuffs, and he tosses them up in the boot as he addresses the men tersely.

CURLY
Roll a couple of them logs into the water. (Looking up at Buck) Drive in the river till she's up to the hubs.

The scene dissolves to a view of a couple of big burning logs rolling down with a hiss of steam into the river. The coach wheels are next seen rippling into the water; then the horses struggling into belly-deep water; then Buck, tossing stones and yelling at the horses; following which the stagecoach is seen in hub-deep water- - - a big log having been lashed to each side of the coach to float it across. Curly is climbing back to the driver's seat beside Buck and the elegant Hatfield is wading to the coach door. Ringo is perched on top of the coach.

In a closer view, the passengers are visible through the windows, Dallas and Lucy are naturally still inside and they have been joined by Gatewood, Boone and Peacock. Hatfield is at the coach door which is closed.

CURLY
(calling to Ringo). Make her light as you can, Kid. Throw off that luggage. (Then down to Hatfield) Throw out that stuff inside, Hatfield.

Ringo is already tossing heavy bags from the top of the coach, and they splash into the water. Through the opposite windows we can see the bags which Ringo is tossing off into the water. Doc Boone has heard Curly's command and he already has Peacock's sample case open and is stowing bottles in his pockets and behind him and everywhere he hurriedly can. As Hatfield opens the coach door Doc thrusts the sample case into his hands, and Hatfield tosses it into the water with a splash; it floats down-stream. Hatfield next takes hold of Gatewood's valise but before he can get it out of the coach Gatewood jerks out his Colt and covers the gambler.

GATEWOOD
Let it alone!

The banker's finger is on the trigger and Hatfield has no recourse but to obey. A cold smile curls his lips and there is polite murder in his drawling voice.

HATFFIELD
That's another thing we must take up in Lordsburg.

And he climbs in and pulls the coach door shut behind him as he drops into a seat.

The stagecoach once more appears in hub-deep water, Buck yelling at the horses and chucking stones. They advance into deeper water; in a moment they leave bottom and begin swimming. Midway in the stream the horses become panicky and for all Buck's efforts they try to turn back to shallow water. Ringo, who has been standing on the lurching top, agilely climbs across Curly, jumps down on the wagon-pole, works his way out and climbs on the near leader, turning the horses toward the opposite bank again and working them across the river.

The stagecoach is afloat on the logs but it is so heavy that it sinks well into the water, which rises ankle-deep on the floor. Dallas holds the baby tightly to her bosom, one arm around Mrs. Mallory. Gatewood has his valise on his knees. Doc is scrounging about in the muddy water and he triumphantly pulls up a lost bottle. Peacock sits stiffly with his hands on his knees, unable to say anything. Hatfield alone seems unconcerned.

And now at last, as the scene dissolves, the stagecoach appears in fairly shallow water on the opposite side. Curly and Ringo have cut away the lashings which held the logs to the sides of the coach and they are floating away downstream. Then this scene dissolves to a view of the stagecosch moving up from the river and topping a rise of ground ahead, and now the stage is entering a new kind of country, desolate, with giant cacti like gaunt fingers pointing up at the cloudless sky.

The road winds through the canyon, and the stagecoach comes around a distant turn into view and rolls slowly toward the mouth of the canyon. Then the view moves up and around to the rim of the canyon wall, and we see a band of savage-looking Apaches, their foreheads smeared with white warpaint, lurking in ambush, waiting for the stagecoach to enter the canyon below. At their center stands the most dreaded figure in the Southwest, Geronimo, powerful of frame, with a craggy face that seems carved out of red rock.

On the box, Buck is relaxed, his attention concentrated on the horses, while Curly has his rifle slung in the crook of his arm. Vigilantly he scans the road ahead and the rims of the canyon they are approaching. Then in the stagecoach, Doc is cheerfully humming his Texas song, and everyone seems happy again except Gatewood.

GATEWOOD
Well, we're past the worst of it.
Sorry I flew off the handle, Hatfield.
Just nervous, you know how it is.
(Hatfield eyes him sardonically and says nothing.) No hard feelings I hope.

HATFIELD
(deliberately ignoring him and addressing Mrs. Mallory opposite him). It won't be long now, Mrs. Mallory, before you're with your husband- - - (Then a sardonic smile touches his lips; and he glances at Gatewood almost gaily.)- - - and we'll all be in Lordsburg.

DOC BOONE
(breaking off his humming and looking at Dallas). How's the baby, Dallas? How's Little Coyote?

DALLAS
(Looking down at the bundle which she hugs in her arms). She's asleep, Joe.

PEACOCK
(sitting up, rather proud of himself). Well, all in all, it's been an exciting - - - (coughing)- - - but very interesting trip, now hasn't it? I've really- - - ahem- - - enjoyed it. (A proud smile touches his solemn face for the first time during the trip.) I'll have some thrilling stories for Agatha and the children.

A close view of Doc Boone shows him uncorking a sample bottle with satisfaction.

DOC BOONE
Well, now that we're out of danger, friend Peacock- - -

As he says this he turns to look at Peacock, but at the same instant there is a whistling sound and a startled expression comes over Doc's face.

The view draws back quickly to take in Peacock. The little man is sitting bolt upright with a look of unbelief on his face and an arrow projecting from his left shoulder. Peacock utters no sound, just sits there incredulously as his right hand gropes to the arrow.

Then the group comes into view, everyone staring at the little drummer. Lucy screams, and Dallas slips her arm around her. Their trance of astonishment is broken by the boom of Curly's rifle just above them. The baby wakes and begins crying at the top of its lungs.

Buck is yelling at the horses and chucking stones, while Curly raises his rifle again to the canyon rim and it explodes with a shattering report.

At the canyon rim an Apache falls from a ledge and goes slipping down amongst boulders. There is the rattle of gunfire from along the rim.

Curly reloads and fires again, and Buck is urging the horses to greater speed, yelling at the top of his wheezy voice.

In the coach, Gatewood has drawn his Colt and watching out the rear window at which he sits, he fires upward. Doc Boone has pulled the arrow from Peacock's shoulder and is bandaging it with several large white handkerchiefs, evidently borrowed from Hatfield and Gatewood. Hatfield fires out the window, then looks at Lucy as a rattle of gunfire is heard from the canyon walls. Ringo has no gun, and looks upward, figuring how to get hold of his rifle which he knows is in the boot.

HATFIELD
Get down, Mrs. Mallory- - - way down!
Keep her down, Dallas!

As arrow whistles through the window and plants itself in the front panel of the coach near his head, vibrating there. Hatfield raises his six-gun carefully and fires. The baby squalls and Dallas, crouching low beside Lucy, tries to comfort it.

The stage is tearing out of the canyon and away over the plain that leads toward Lordsburg. But as it goes careening past two score Indians on horses come tearing down the slope from both canyon walls, riding wildly in pursuit.

The stagecoach is now going full speed, Buck yelling at the horses. Curly is shooting back, and Gatewood and Doc Boone are shooting out the windows from their side. Ringo is crawling through the door window. He gets hold of the top and hangs there precariously for a moment. Then he begins to pull himself to the exposed top. He makes it, crawls forward, and reaches into the boot, getting his rifle. Curly hands him a box of cartridges without ever taking his attention from the pursuing Apaches.

This dissolves to a view of the stagecoach and the pursuit as thirty or forty Indians,some of them with old rifles, some with bows and arrows, and a few with lances and buffalo hide bucklers on their arms, are riding furiously, gaining ground on both sides of the coach. They are still behind but their intention is plain- - - to come alongside on both sides and rake the passengers with their fire.

Ringo lies flat, picking off Apaches with his rifle. Buck is driving for all he is worth, while Curly fires back methodically. Buck's hat flies off and he ducks his head.

In the coach: The plain seems to fly by. - - - Doc Boone has finished bandaging Peacock's shoulder and has pulled out an old Civil War horse pistol the size of a cannon. He aims carefully out the front window at which he sits and fires. Powder smoke drifts in the stagecoach now. Hatfield is crouched at the window beside Mrs. Mallory, gun in hand. Gatewood is at the window beside Dallas. He fires and then yells up furiously at Buck.

GATEWOOD
Faster! They're gaining! Faster, you fool!

He ducks his head in as a bullet splinters the panel over his head, then drops on his knee by the door and fires again. An Indian comes tearing along about fifty feet away, but Doc Boone aims his big gun and it explodes with a roar. The Indian flops from his saddle and is dragged along by the slackening horse.

DOC BOONE
(letting out a whoop). Got ya, Johnny Reb!

Now the moving view of the pursuit shows the Apaches gaining. There are shots from Curly, and from Ringo behind him on the top and from the windows - - - little puffs of white smoke. One Indian on a fast calico pony begins pulling away from the horde, rapidly gaining.

The interior of the coach is thick with powder smoke and the panel splinters between the two windows. Lucy crouches low in the seat, Dallas trying to shelter her and protect the baby, which is still crying. The Apache who was forging ahead comes abreast of the window - - - a weaving figure reeling nakedly on a calico pony, rifle raised and pointed in his bony elbows. Hatfield, who has been crouching at the window, fires and the Apache goes flying from his pony like a shot rabbit. The coach is bouncing and swaying with the rush of its speed.

On the box Ringo is crouched and firing on the flat top behind Buck and Curly, and as the latter turns and raises his rifle, there is the crack of a gun and Buck almost pitches off the box as a bullet hits his rifle arm. He makes a wild grab at the lines but two of them have fallen from his hands. Ringo sees what has happened; he turns and crawls forward. The three man look down helplessly toward the horses. Buck has only four reins in his hands and it is torture to hold on to them with that right arm.

The reins of the leaders are seen dragging on the ground. - - - Ringo climbs down from the boot between the galloping wheelers. Then he works his way forward carefully on the wagon pole, trying to reach the leaders, balancing himself on the wheelers and swingers. From the end of the pole he springs to the back of a leader and crouches low on its back, guiding it, still clinging to his rifle with one hand. - - - On the box, Buck hangs on to the four lines grimly but it is really Ringo who is doing the driving now.

CURLY
(yelling encouragingly). Stick with 'em, Kid!

Then his pipe flies from his mouth and he swings and raises his rifle to one side and fires. An Apache brave collapes in his saddle but still hangs on, one foot in the stirrup; his rifle slips from his hands.

Gatewood, Boone and Hatfield are firing carefully from within the coach, which is full of powder smoke.

Ringo is bent low over the near leader, urging it on. A savage-looking Indian, lance in hand, buckler over his left arm, comes galloping in, gaining on the leaders and working in close to drive his lance through Ringo. - - - Ringo, hanging to the horse with one hand, jerks his rifle by the loading lever, swings it up and fires pointblank.- - - The Indian tumbles from his saddle and his lance jabs into the earth with the full force of his weight. The riderless pony gallops on, while the Apache lies there one arm on the lance, as if pinned to the plain.

Inside the smoke-filled coach, Boone and Gatewood are shooting out of the windows on one side, Doc whooping like an Indian when he makes a hit. The baby wails and Dallas hugs it to her breast desperately, trying to shield it from bullets. The panels splinter over their heads. Hatfield kneels at the door window next to Lucy. Beyond him we see Apaches riding and shooting but keeping a fair distance now. Hatfield suddenly ceases firing and leans against the door, his hand gripping the sill. He looks at Lucy in a way that is desperate and forlorn, and then his head drops to the window sill and he slumps to the floor. Lucy, with some sudden strength, suddenly pushes up in her seat, a wild light in her eyes, and her voice is wild.

LUCY
You hear it? You hear it?

DALLAS
(desperately). Please, Mrs. Mallory - - - keep down!

LUCY
Listen, it's a bugle! They're blowing the charge! Can't you hear it?

For a moment they look at her, thinking her insanely hysterical. Then they too (as we do) hear the sound of a bugle blowing.

DOC BOONE
(with an exultant whoop).
Glory! Glory!

He pokes his old cannon out the window and it explodes with a shattering roar, after which the bugle grows loud. A troop of U.S. Cavalry comes pouring over a rise of ground. - - - The Apaches pull their horses to their haunches and begin turning in flight. Cavalry comes sweeping in from two sides and the Indians flail their ponies with their moccasined feet as they head back the way they have come, the cavalry closing in.

The stagecoach slows down, Buck pulls the lathered animals to a panting stop, and Ringo drops from the lead horse he has been riding and runs to the stagecoach door.

In the stagecoach: Ringo jerks open the door and looks in. A close view shows Dallas clinging to the baby. She looks as if seeing someone who has come back from the dead. Her heart is in the one word: "Kid!" A close view of Ringo shows him looking in at the door, but his expression changes as he shifts his gaze downward.

RINGO

Hatfield?

Hatfield sits slumped, his back against the opposite door. He lifts his head with an effort and tries to smile. He looks up at Lucy and she leans down close to him pityingly. They are seen close together as Lucy bends over his gaunt face. It is an effort for him to speak, but he manages it.

HATFIELD

If you ever see Judge Ashburn - - - (fighting for breath) - - - tell him his son died - - - (attempting his old sardonic smile as he whispers) - - - shall we say, better than he lived?

And as he slumps forward, the scene fades out.

PART FOUR

A Lordsburg street, curving to the left so that one cannot see its full length, fades in. Oil lamps light the store and saloon fronts, creating the usual Western atmosphere with an eerie effect of shadows from stark points of light. There are several buckboards and a number of cow ponies hitched to the racks that line the street on either side. It is Saturday night and Lordsburg is full of ranchers and miners, cowboys, business men and diverse town characters. There is a thudding of hooves and around the turn in the distance come galloping four or five cavalrymen, their horses lathered and their uniforms covered with dust as they sweep past at full gallop. Then a quartermaster's wagon comes around the turn at a sharp trot.

As the quartermaster's wagon draws near, the uniformed driver pulls the horses to a halt in front of the Army building which is opposite the biggest and brightest saloon in town, El Dorado. Several Army officers and four or five ladies have been waiting on the sidewalk in front of the Army office, and they flock to the wagon. A stalwart captain lifts Lucy Mallory out in his arms and the ladies crowd around anxiously.

CAPTAIN
Thank heaven you're safe, Mrs. Mallory.

LUCY
(her voice trembling with the agony of her suspense). How is my husband?

CAPTAIN
Doing fine, don't you worry.

A LADY
It wasn't a bad wound, dear.

CAPTAIN
We'll take you to him immediately.

SECOND LADY
Where's the baby?

Dallas is climbing out with the bundled baby in her arms. She brings the baby to the group of ladies surrounding Lucy. The first lady takes the baby from Dallas and they all go into the Army office, followed by the captain who is carrying Lucy. Dallas stands there looking after the group as they vanish into the office, the ladies all cooing over the baby.

VOICES
It's a little girl. What a dear she is! You're a brave woman, Mrs. Mallory. It's a miracle you're both alive. What a darling baby!

As the quartermaster wagon which brought Lucy and Dallas into town moves out, a second quartermaster wagon moves in to take its place. Dallas starts walking slowly up the street and out of sight.

At the second quartermaster wagon, none other than Buck is helped out of the wagon by a sergeant. His right arm is bandaged and in a sling. As he gets to the sidewalk an enormous Mexican family, led by a buxom girl, swoops upon him and hails him as a hero in a flood of staccato Spanish. There are about ten children, aunts, uncles and the old grandfather from Chihuahua; and with them all praising Buck as a great Indian fighter it sounds like a bunch of parrots trying to out-shrill each other. They move Buck out of view so that the quartermaster wagon can again be seen. The sergeant is now helping Peacock, his shoulder well bandaged now, out of the wagon. Peacock is in the most benign state he has ever experienced.

Self-confidence has flowed into the meek little man from some mysterious source. The sergeant helps him toward the Army office and as Peacock passes somewhat unsteadily he addresses the sergeant in a dreamy voice.

PEACOCK
What was that medicine Dr. Boone gave me after I fainted?

And now the stagecoach comes into view around the bend, the tired horses walking, as people flock out of stores and saloons to watch its arrival. - - - Ringo is driving, looking straight ahead; Curly sits beside him; and within the coach are visible Doc Boone and Gatewood. Then there is a moving view of the faces of the men standing motionless along the wooden sidewalk and gazing on Ringo. The view rests on the faces of two men. One man is thin with a drooping moustache, a cigar clamped in his teeth; the other is a short, fat little man whose eyebrows are raised in childish astonishment.

FAT MAN
(with a wheezy gasp). Look, it's the Kid!

Ringo is driving slowly, Curly sitting silently next to him.

Dallas is standing between two men on the sidewalk, looking in his direction.

In the El Dorado saloon: A piano is banging, a Mexican woman singing, amid the usual racket of a frontier saloon on Saturday night. - - - Five men are playing poker at a table, one of them a broad-shouldered man whose face we do not see. The last chip has been thrown into the pot.

FIRST COWPUNCHER
Call you, Luke.

LUKE PLUMMER
(the owner of that broad back). Aces and eights.

FIRST COWPUNCHER
(disgustedly). Wins.

SECOND COWPUNCHER
(with a laugh as Luke reaches for the pot). Dead man's hand, Luke.

The two rabbity men who were watching Ringo in the street sidle in beside Luke. The tall, thin man with the cigar taps his shoulder.

THIN MAN
Luke.

Plummer turns and for the first time we see his face in profile - - - hard, unpleasant, dangerous. He looks up at the two men irritably. The fat man with the childish face speaks in a wheezy whisper.

FAT MAN
Ringo Kid's in town.

THIN MAN
Drivin' the stage.

Plummer looks at the aces and eights in has hand and then throws the cards down on the table and rises abruptly, his chair scraping. He strides past the two informers toward the bar, all the poker players looking after him, forgetting their game.

Ringo and Curly, on the box of the coach, are seen close as Ringo looks straight ahead.

RINGO
What'll they give me for breakin' out?

CURLY
(gruffly). 'Nother year.

RINGO
(after a pause). You know my ranch?

CURLY
Yeah.

RINGO
Will you see she gets there all right?

Curly turns and stares at the boy with astonishment.

CURLY
Who, Dallas?

RINGO
(looking straight ahead). Yeah. This ain't no town for a nice girl.

Curly is staring at him as if he couldn't believe his ears, but Ringo is still looking straight ahead.

RINGO
Will you do it for me?

CURLY
Yeah.

As the stagecoach drives up in front of the El Dorado saloon and halts, men crowd out of the saloon to see the arrival. Then a man with a sheriff's badge pushes through the crowd to the front wagon wheel and calls up to Curly as Doc Boone climbs out of the coach followed by Gatewood, who carries his valise.

SHERIFF
Hiya, Curly.

CURLY
Howdy, sheriff.

SHERIFF
Hear you fellers had a hot time.
Get my man through all right?

Gatewood, still rankling, taps the sheriff's arm importantly and points up at Ringo, as they form part of a group which includes a portion of the crowd.

GATEWOOD
If you don't want to lose your prisoner,
sheriff, you'd better take him yourself.

The sheriff, puzzled by having the driver pointed out, turns and looks at Gatewood.

SHERIFF
Who are you, mister?

Curly's long suspicion suddenly takes form as Gatewood hesitates.

CURLY
Why don't you tell 'im, Gatewood?

Gatewood's free right hand reaches toward his holster but the sheriff jerks out his gun and covers him.

SHERIFF
Get 'em UP! (And the heavy bag clunks
to the ground as Gatewood's arms go up to
his shoulders galvanically.) You're
pretty smart but you didn't figure
they'd get the telegraph line fixed, did
you?

GATEWOOD
(indignantly). I don't know what
you're talking about!

The sheriff picks up the valise with his left hand and prods Gatewood through the crowd with his gun barrel.

SHERIFF
I'm talking about you cleaning out your own bank, Gatewood. Just keep goin'.

Gatewood is protesting loudly as he goes through the crowd with the muzzle of the sheriff's Colt in his back.

GATEWOOD
I want a lawyer! I demand a lawyer! You're making a mistake and you're going to regret it!

The crowd, eager for excitement, surges after the sheriff and his prisoner.

Dallas now walks slowly along toward the stagecoach, coming from the opposite direction in which the sheriff and the crowd have gone. She looks as if she didn't know where she was going or for what purpose. She comes alongside the stagecoach, stops and looks up at Curly and Ringo on the box, both men looking down at her.

RINGO
(turning to Curly). Can I meet you here in ten minutes? (Curly doesn't answer. He just sits looking down at Dallas.) I gave you my word, Curly. I ain't goin' back on it.

CURLY
(lifting his gaze from Dallas and looking sternly in Ringo's face). All right, Kid...I'll get a buckboard hitched up.

Dallas stands looking up at Ringo as the Kid climbs down with her battered little suitcase. Buck, who has been celebrating his prowess as an Indian fighter, hurriedly comes out of the saloon and confronts Ringo, his arm in the sling. Buck's voice is wheezy with excitement.

BUCK
Watch out, Kid. The Plummers are waitin' for you!

At this Curly reaches into the boot and silently hands down Ringo's rifle.

RINGO
Thanks.

BUCK
(wheezily). Got enough ca'tridges?

Ringo pulls them out of his pocket, and we next see three bright shells in Ringo's hand.

In the group including Dallas, Ringo, Buck and Curly who leans down from the box, Ringo weighs the three shells in his hand.

RINGO
Yeah. (Dropping shells back in his pocket) I'll be back this way in ten minutes to give myself up to Curly. You can tell the Plummers.

With the rifle in his left hand he stoops to pick up Dallas' suitcase with his right hand, hesitates, shifts his rifle to the right hand and picks up the suitcase with his left hand. Then he starts off down the sidewalk abreast of the girl. Buck and Curly look after them sympathetically.

Dallas and Ringo come to a street corner a block away. He starts to turn the corner with her but she stops him, looking at him with terror in her eyes.

DALLAS
Good night, Kid.

RINGO
This where you live?

DALLAS
No!

RINGO
I got to know where you live, don't I?

DALLAS
(white-faced). Don't come any further. (As he looks at her uncomprehendingly) It's all been a crazy dream! I was out of my mind, just hoping! (Desperately) Say goodbye here, Kid, say goodbye!

Ringo shifts the suitcase to his right hand with the rifle and takes her arm firmly with his left hand.

RINGO
We ain't never gonna say goodbye. (He leads her along, and she walks like a girl going to her death.)

Inside the El Dorado saloon, Doc Boone is at the bar, the piano is still banging away, the Mexican woman singing. Luke Plummer steps up to the bar and makes a sign with his hand to the bartender, who reaches under the bar and pulls out a sawed-off shotgun, Doc Boone observing him without comment. Three or four of the long line of men at the bar beyond Doc slap down payment for their drinks and slide out.

A group of men at a Faro table look off at the doorway where two hard-looking men come striding in together, everybody making way for them. The players at the Faro table pick up their chips and slide out for cover.

At the piano at the rear, the "professor" is pounding away while the Mexican woman sings. She suddenly stops. The "professor" goes on for a few bars and then looks over his shoulder,still pounding. The two hard-faced men approach Luke Plummer at the bar. They look at him and he nods. (Doc Boone is just beyond them at the bar.)

The "profesSsor" stops pounding and hurriedly gets up, not forgetting his mug of beer as he follows the Mexican woman. The men in the line beyond the trio are paying off and getting out, but Doc Boone drinks unconcernedly. The players at a card table are picking up their chips and getting up, keeping an eye on the door. - - - Two bartenders are taking down the mirrors. Only Doc Boone and the Plummers remain.

The three Plummers finish a drink, then Luke swings around sharply to look at the door. The others do likewise, their hands dropping toward their holstered guns. Boone doesn't turn. The door opens and Buck steps in, his arm in the sling. He stops short, a frightened look on his face as he looks at: The three Plummers standing with their backs to the bar, formidable-looking.

BUCK
I - - - (clearing a frog out of his throat) The Kid says he's comin' back this way in ten minutes.

Now Ringo and Dallas are seen moving down the street, Ringo carrying her suitcase in his left hand, his rifle swung carelessly in his right. Neither looks at the other. Neither says anything. Her feet seem to drag as she walks, as if she wanted never to come to her destination. The low adobe shacks along the sidewalk seem mean and squalid. The lighting is different. Even the shadows begin to assume evil forms. More and more shadows begin to envelop them. After a few paces we hear, almost inaudibly, a cheap piano banging out ragtime, a half-note off tune. Ringo looks around queerly at the plainly disreputable background, which is so different from his naive picture of Dallas' social station, and he stops.

RINGO
Ain't we goin' the wrong way?

She doesn't answer, just keeps on walking, and he has to take a couple

of quick strides to catch up with her. The sour piano grows louder with each step. The shadows seem to crouch around them. They come to crooked steps that lead down into a gully, and Ringo starts to go past them, but Dallas turns and starts down. He turns and follows her. The syncopated off-tune piano grows louder.

Dallas comes down the steps, almost at a run, but Ringo comes down three steps at a time, overtakes her, drops the suitcase, and catches her arm.

RINGO

Dallas!

She turns and faces him as the piano bangs loud and raucously, making the night hideous. Two girls and a man come down the steps past them tipsily and one of the girls laughs shrilly.

A close view of Ringo and Dallas as they face each other shows bewilderment covering his face, while her face is hard and bitter with despair. She tries to get away as if to fling herself into the depth below.

DALLAS

Let go, let me go! I told you not to follow me!

He just hangs on to her arm, too bewildered for a moment to say anything. He looks down past her into the gully, trying to understand. She too looks down, mistaking his thoughts, and her voice is harsh.

DALLAS

Yes, that's where I'm going.

The steps are seen to lead to a rickety bridge which crosses a thread of dirty water. The three figures, the two girls and the man, are unsteadily crossing this bridge toward a shantytown where the sour piano is banging. Oil flares flicker in narrow alleys between the shacks, and figures lurch about.

Ringo, standing close with her, looks down for an instant as if fascinated. Dallas tries to fight back her tears but she can't. He looks at her and his voice is firm.

RINGO

I asked you to marry me.

DALLAS

(choking). I'll never forget you asked me, Kid. That's something.

RINGO

(holding out his wrists, his voice calm). See them scars? Handcuffs...

Scars wear off, Dallas. (He puts his hands on her shaking shoulders.) I ain't gonna give you a chance to forget me. You wait here.

Abruptly he picks up his rifle and starts climbing swiftly up the steps. She stands looking after him as if she can't believe what she has heard.

Now up a street, cowboys are unlooping the reins of their mustangs from the hitching posts and leading them into corrals. The street is rapidly emptying. A Chinaman is innocently scanning a Chinese news-board posted on an adobe wall. Two other Chinese enter excitedly, jabber a couple of words, and the three of them dash into a doorway for cover. A rancher is piling his wife and three children into a buck-board. He jumps in and whips the horses, tearing down the street out of town. A couple of children are playing in front of a small adobe house. A woman dashes out, grabs one up in her arms, dragging the other by the hand as she flees back into the house.

In front of a grocery store, the proprietor is hurriedly closing wooden shutters over the glass windows.

Through the window of a print shop we see an old type-setter in shirt sleeves, a green eye-shade on his brow, bent over a type-box beside an old-fashioned printing press. The proprietor, also in shirt sleeves, is hurriedly entering the shop from the street. On the window is lettered in the foreground: "Lordsburg Sentinel." Then we see the interior of the print shop, the old type-setter straightening up as the proprietor bustles in.

EDITOR
Kill that story about those anarchist labor riots in Chicago, Billy. Take this down. (He lights his stub cigar and dictates as the old man scribbles.) "The Ringo Kid was killed on Main Street in Lordsburg tonight. Among the additional dead were - - -" (He shakes out the match.) Leave that blank for a spell.

TYPESETTER
(still scribbling). I didn't hear no shooting, Ed.

EDITOR
You will, Billy, you will.

Next the El Dorado saloon comes into view. Everyone stands as in a tableau, waiting in silence. The three Plummers stand with their backs against the bar, not far from the door, while Doc Boone is still leaning on the bar, preoccupied with his bottle. Two bartenders lean on the bar, ready to duck under it at the first shot. There isn't a sound. The door, however, bursts open and the fat

little man with the childish face catapults in and calls out to the Plummers as he scurries for cover behind the end of the bar.

FAT MAN
Kid jest turned the corner!

Luke Plummer is now seen in the foreground with Ike and Hank next to him. Next to Hank is Doc. Luke swings the sawed-off shotgun into the crook of his arm and jerks his head to his brothers. They are just about to start for the door as Doc, who seems to have been absorbed in his bottle, comes over and confronts Luke, and Luke stops short. Doc's tone is amiable but firm.

DOC BOONE
I'll take that shotgun, Luke.

LUKE
You'll take it in the belly if you don't get outa my way.

DOC BOONE
If it can stand the kind of whiskey they sell here it can stand lead. I'll swear out a warrant for murder if you step outside with that shotgun.

Luke stares at him for a moment. Doc holds out his hand as if he were only asking for the wrist of a patient. Luke passes him the gun, his voice low.

LUKE
We'll take care of you later.

And he strides past Doc toward the door, followed by his two brothers. As the door bangs Doc swallows feebly and drops the shotgun on the bar from nerveless fingers. He gasps to the two bartenders who have been watching in the background with bulging eyes.

DOC BOONE
Gimme a drink.

BARTENDER
(simultaneously as they dive to serve him). Yes, sir! (Admiringly) You betcha!

In the street now, the three Plummers are walking shoulder to shoulder along the board sidewalk toward the turn in the street. A woman's voice calls Luke's name, whereupon he stops short and looks up, and the view moves up to a window where a Mexican girl leans out and drops a rifle, then the view moves down as Luke catches it.

LUKE
(calling up). Thanks.

And the three brothers move forward again, scanning the empty street ahead of them.

At the corner of the opposite end of the street, Ringo comes around into the lamplight, shoving the three shells into his rifle as he passes. Then he is seen walking away, his loaded rifle swung in his hand, his boots echoing on the board sidewalk. The Plummers have passed the other way around the turn in the street, and as far as can be seen beyond Ringo the street is absolutely deserted.

At the other end of the street, the Plummers, retracing their steps on the opposite side, come around the corner together. Luke gets a glimpse of the boy at the far end evidently, for he swings his rifle to ready and calls to his brothers: "Spread out!" Luke keeps to the wall, advancing, while Ike and Hank step out into the street, also advancing at an angle. At the opposite end, Ringo is then seen walking steadily ahead, his footbeats loud on the boards in the empty night. There is the crack of a rifle and he makes a dive for cover.

Dallas stands on the steps to the gully as a rifle cracks loudly, then another, then a volley of four or five shots in quick succession. The moving scene bringing her very close, we see her reacting with anguish; it is almost as if the bullets had been aimed at her. Then there is absolute silence. The sour piano, which had been silent in the dive toward which she has been heading as her only destination, begins banging again, and Dallas' shoulders droop and there is a look of death in her face.

The view drawing back, shows Dallas standing there humbly with the patience that life has beaten into her. Then she turns and looks down into the gully, the light from the flares flickering in her face. She stoops, picks up her battered suitcase and begins climbing the steps, hardly able to find the strength, so that she has to cling to the railing.

The scene dissolves to the corner at the end of the street - - - the scene stretching from the main street down into the dark side street that leads toward the steps. Dallas emerges slowly from the black shadows and comes forward. She stops short and drops her suitcase and her heart seems to tear out of her throat in her cry, "Kid!" But as she cries out, the scene draws back and moves around revealing Ringo, who has come around the corner, his left arm hanging limp at his side. He strides to her and his rifle rattles to the sidewalk as he puts his good right arm around her and holds her close to him. Dallas is crying now in earnest, her throat too full of feeling for a word to pass.

As they stand there together a window blind is pulled up from within the one-story adobe house on the corner. A woman holds up a lamp, peering out, and the lamplight streams across their faces with a touching effect. There is a grating of wheels on gravel and shadows fall on the adobe wall beside which they stand in each other's arms. The woman inside the room quickly pulls down the blind again.

They are next seen on the sidewalk as a buckboard has driven alongside them. A lamp post leans at the corner and the glow of this lamp illuminates the pair of horses and the buckboard. The figures of Curly and Doc Boone are climbing out.

And now, in a closer view, Doc appears holding the reins, standing in the street while Curly turns to Ringo.

CURLY
Ready, Kid?

RINGO
Kin she come along?

CURLY
(gruffly). Get in Dallas. Might as well stick with the Kid long as you can.

Curly helps Dallas up on the driver's seat. She starts to move to the other side but Curly hands her the lines which he has taken from the silent Doc Boone, his voice still gruff.

CURLY
Set there, Dallas. (He growls to Ringo.) Other side, Kid.

Ringo climbs in, waiting for Curly to follow, but Curly doesn't. Instead he stoops and picks up a stone and then suddenly seems to go insane, for he lets out a bellow that booms through the street as he socks the stone at the rump of the near horse.

CURLY
Hiya, hiya, giddap!

The horses leap away and Dallas nearly spills from the seat as she hangs on to the reins. In a few seconds the buckboard with Ringo and Dallas is out of sight and even the sound of the runaway horses is growing faint. Then the scene starts drawing close to Curly and Doc Boone, and the latter grabs Curly's arm and shakes him angrily.

DOC BOONE
You dad-blamed fool, why didn't you tell 'em Luke confessed to killing his foreman?

CURLY
(laughing). If you had the brains of a tadpole, Doc, you'd figger out why they're better off without knowin' - - - headin' over the Border!

The scene dissolves to a view of the moving buckboard. Darkness still lies over the land but sunrise whitens the clouds on the horizon as the

buckboard comes up in silhouette against it. Then the vehicle wheels away into the sunrise, carrying Ringo and Dallas to their new life, and the picture fades out.

END